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ABSTRACT

"GED Items" is published by the GED Testing Service of the American Council on Education. This volume contains six issues, each containing several articles related to adult education, equivalency testing, and the General Educational Development (GED) program. In the lead article of the first issue, Judith Anderson discusses the Internet and its relevance to adult education. The second issue focuses on a radio campaign conducted by the GED Testing Service to promote its programs. The campaign features singers Anne Murray and Waylon Jennings, both GED graduates. The emphasis in Issue 3 is the beginning of full-scale GED testing in Ontario (Canada), as that province joins 10 other Canadian provinces in offering GED testing. Issue 4/5 profiles football player Reggie White, who is working with his family to promote GED testing for adults who want a second chance at a high school education. The sixth issue discusses graduation ceremonies and other rites of passage for those receiving the GED. Each issue also contains "Teaching Tips" for teacher improvement, graduate profiles, and other articles and information related to GED testing. (Contains one table and three graphs.) (SLD)

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Volume 13, No. 1-6 **Date: Jan-Dec 1996**

GED *Items*

American Council on Education

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GED TESTING SERVICE

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GED Items more than 24,000 readers

What is the Internet?

The Internet is a worldwide network of computer networks that connects university, government, commercial, and other computers in more than 150 countries. There are thousands of networks and millions of users on the Internet, with the numbers expanding daily.

by Judith Anderson

Using the Internet, you can send electronic mail, chat with colleagues around the world, and obtain information on a wide variety of subjects.

Three principal uses of the Internet are:

Electronic mail—"e-mail" lets you electronically send messages to other users who have Internet e-mail addresses. Delivery time varies, but it's possible to send mail across the globe and get a response in minutes. LISTSERVs are special interest mailing lists that allow for the large-scale exchange of information.

USENET newsgroups—a system of special interest discussion groups, called newsgroups, to which readers can "post" messages to other computers in the network, like a giant set of electronic bulletin boards.

Information files—Government agencies, schools, and universities, commercial firms, interest groups, and private individuals place a variety of information on-line. Originally text only, they increasingly contain pictures and sound.

How Do I Explore the Internet?

To get started, you'll need a personal computer, a modem (or direct link to a network), telecommunications software, a telephone line, and an Internet account. It's easier than it sounds, but it still helps to have a good book or two, or better yet, an experienced friend. Colleges and universities often provide Internet accounts to their faculty and students at little or no cost. Many commercial vendors provide Internet service for a fee. Make sure that you access your vendor with a local telephone call. Otherwise, long distance charges apply.

The simplest way for new users to navigate the Internet may be through the "gopher," which uses a series of menus to organize and provide access to information. Gopher, while easy to use, provides text-only information. It's much more rewarding, if you have the right equipment, to use the World Wide Web (WWW). The Web organizes information to provide for linkages (hypertext links) to related documents (home pages), allowing users to move quickly and easily to sources of related information.

It's easier than it sounds, but it still helps to have a good book or two, or better yet, an experienced friend.

Software, such as Mosaic® and Netscape® (web browsers), gives users a graphical interface, allowing for (theoretically) effortless "point and click" travel through cyberspace. To run this type of software, you'll need an up-to-date personal computer and a fast modem. Most users find the rewards worth the extra investment.

What's Available?

A world of information awaits potential users. In a single session on the Internet, you can: take a pictorial tour of Alexandria, Egypt and learn the city's history; learn about the human heart, see the earth from space, or dissect a frog; listen to a Bach fugue played on the world's 10th largest pipe organ; find your way through the Louvre and view the Mona Lisa!

The Internet contains a wide variety of information, much of it

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GED's Integrity: Everyone's Job

by Jean Lowe

There are places in the United States right now where no one can take the GED Tests because the tests have been compromised. A test is compromised any time confidential information about its content or answers becomes available to test candidates. It doesn't matter how the information gets out. Once it's out, the tests must be recalled. Until we can replace the compromised material in local testing centers, innocent people suffer the consequences.

It's easy to see that tests can be compromised through theft of test booklets or answers. Does this happen often? No. Is it the most common kind of compromise? No. It's just the easiest to detect. GED Examiners follow stringent guidelines for handling and administering the tests which result in few problems, considering the enormous size of the GED program.

I think compromise happens because we so much want to help people who have fewer opportunities than we do. We know how much getting a GED diploma means to them so we don't really look for cheating and fraud. Sometimes we even make it possible. Here are a few examples of this sort of compromise:

A dedicated teacher knows that most of his students have just been laid off by the largest local employer. He sees their desperation every day and asks: "Writing an essay is so hard. Won't it help these people, trapped by cruel economic forces, to practice the essay in advance? If we just outline the issues to discuss in the current topic, it'll be easier for them to pass. Wouldn't any teacher do that?"

Perhaps a prison guard knows a prisoner who won't be eligible for parole until he gets a GED: "What's so wrong about passing on the notes another inmate made when he took the test yesterday? Maybe it will help this guy pass and get out of here."

In time...all the little "favors" add up to a big disservice that affects us all

Perhaps an examiner leaves the testing room "for just a moment to see to that commotion in the hall"—allowing a young woman to ask her best friend about a math formula.

Or maybe a naive examiner, thrilled with the success of candidates at her center, is delighted that one teacher was able to get 93% of her students to pass the tests in a few weeks, even though most of them left school early in life. Failing to challenge such sudden, unusual success can harm the program by making the tests seem too easy.

Of course, more obvious and calculated disclosure occurs when a commercial program sends out a lot of people to "case" the GED Tests so that they can provide targeted instruction to people who will pay their fees.

Paranoia? No. Every one of these incidents really happened. Preventable? I think so. I worked as a GED teacher for five years and always asked my students about the tests. To me, then, the tests were a bureaucratic obstacle. I never thought about maintaining the integrity of the tests because I didn't realize how much it meant to everyone who takes the tests each year.

How are candidates and examinees hurt by these seemingly harmless actions? The most obvious, immediate distress occurs when testing is discontinued in a region and people lose access to the tests for a long time. Others are hurt when a compromise occurs during a testing session because until we know exactly what happened, all test scores are held, and examinees may not retest, even at another center. If examinees turn in a "canned" essay, their scores are withheld, and they're often not allowed to test again for an extended time. But the overreaching concern is this: if people are falsely awarded GED diplomas, they misrepresent GED graduates' abilities to employers, colleges, and the public at large. In time, this can devalue the credential for everyone. And all the little "favors" add up to a big disservice that affects us all.

So who's responsible for protecting GED's good name? Everyone who plays a role in the GED program—examiners and instructors; counselors and office staff; local, state, and national program directors. Each of us is responsible for maintaining the program's integrity. Let's all do our part.

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Grocery Money Launched "Stay-Home Mom" on Path Toward College, Profession

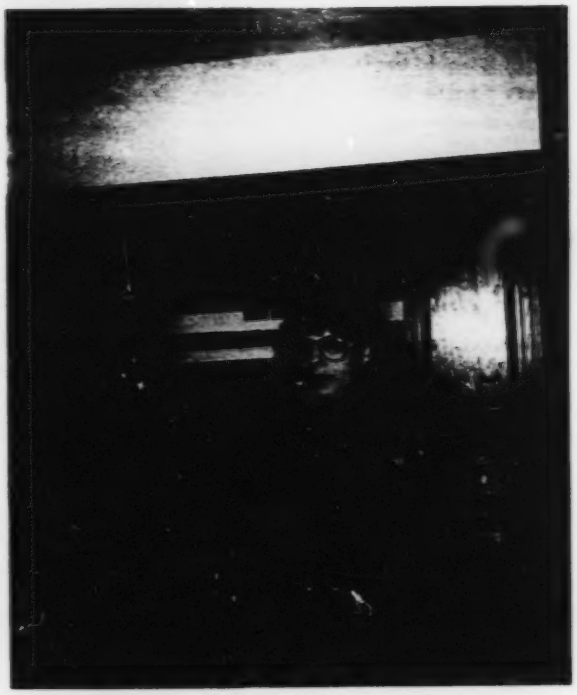
There it was, right up there on the supermarket bulletin board—a screaming-yellow-zonker flyer that drowned out all the other usual bits about miracle diets, jobs, and junk-no-longer-wanted: GED—Get Yours!!

by Jette Engstrom

It was June 1979; I was 29 years old. My husband and I had moved to Denver from San Diego the previous spring, with lots of hopes but no work, three children and a fourth on the way. Things hadn't gone well: my husband was working but the pay was only enough for the barest necessities. The five of us had spent most of the past year in a small one-bedroom in a rather frightening neighborhood. Now, with the baby seven months old, I was looking for a small house to rent, some "new "old furniture, and some kind (any kind) of work to fill in the gaps. I had been hoping to find some leads amid the mess of notes and cards on the bulletin board when that flyer stopped me cold. My heart literally skipped a beat—several! I felt all my old, dashed hopes and dreams rushing back into my mind.

I was an above-average high school student, with a 3.6 GPA. I'd always planned to go to college; I had even considered medical school. In 1968, three months before graduation, I left home to get married. Before I knew it I was a stay-home mom with four children, no skills, and little hope for the future. My goals seemed very far away. Instead, life was one immediate crisis after another—scraping together enough for that week, for food, formula, rent. There was never the time, energy, or money to take a bigger step. Over time I lost sight of any goal but simple survival. It seemed that anything better wasn't in the cards, at least not for us.

Staring at the bright yellow poster on the supermarket wall, I felt cautiously hopeful. Maybe a decent job for me, and a better life for the kids... I jotted down the test dates and location from the poster, folded away $10 out of my grocery money and went home with my mind made up and a sense that nothing would ever be the same again. If someone had told me at that moment just how much my life would change, I wouldn't have believed it!



Jette Engstrom took the GED Tests in 1979 and earned her bachelor's degree in 1987.

I dutifully showed up at the test site on the first available date, a Monday evening. Since my husband was working I'd had to pay a sitter, a real extravagance. When I arrived I was shocked to learn that Monday was only the first night of testing—there were actually five tests, one each night, all week. I wanted to cry—I couldn't pay a sitter five nights in a row! It looked hopeless, but I plucked up my courage and asked the examiner if I could take all five tests that same evening, since I wouldn't be able to come back.

The examiner was doubtful; it had been over ten years since I left

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Desktop Professional Development: Surfing the World Wide Web to Access *Excellence*

by Cornelia Munroe

In recent months, access to the Internet has increased dramatically. Many colleges and universities as well as libraries and other publicly funded programs have computer resource centers where teachers, students, and the general public can "go online", often at no cost. For the ABE and GED teacher, getting access to the Internet, and the very popular World Wide Web, is considerably less of a challenge than it was a year ago. Approximately 9.5 million Americans now are accessing the Internet, using services such as America Online®, web browser software, such as Mosaic® and Netscape®, or the text-based Gopher (see related article, page 1)

At the GED Testing Service, we are often asked to suggest ways in which science teachers can augment their instructional resources. A recent search of the World Wide Web using the Yahoo search engine yielded 33 science education sites, and there are many others that the ABE/GED teacher could find useful. One award winning site worth mentioning is *Access Excellence*, a $10 million experiment sponsored by the biotechnology giant, Genentech, Inc.

Access Excellence is a science education program for high school level biology teachers. Implemented in April 1995, with the help of teachers from the San Francisco area, the project was designed to help eradicate the sense of isolation that many teachers say is their greatest limitation. *Access Excellence* is available on America Online in the education section's Teacher Information Network and as a "home page" on the World Wide Web ("point" your web browser to http://www.gene.com/ae).

Geoff Teeter, a Senior Program Manager at Genentech, says *Access Excellence* "enhances biology teaching by providing a computer network forum in which teachers can share teaching ideas and lesson activities. They can access information, get expert assistance, and share experiences with other teachers to create new ideas." Each year until 1998, a group of about 100 fellows is selected from applicants in a nationwide competition supported by the National Science Teachers Association. The fellows receive laptop computers and specialized computer training.

When I surfed the Internet and located *Access Excellence*, my first response was one of delight at the many resources available in science. The menu allowed me to select from several topic areas by pointing and clicking with my mouse:

- **What's Hot this Month!** — top news items and feature stories
- **Activities Exchange**—classroom activities and ideas
- **About Biotech**—biotechnology, from early history to present career opportunities
- **What's News**—new scientific discoveries, interviews with scientists making news, and more
- **Teacher-Scientist Network**—information and idea exchange between teachers and scientists
- **Teachers' Lounge**—opportunities for networking and collaborating with other teachers
- **Resource Center**—science reference information, meeting and convention schedules, competitions, exhibits, and more.

...one example of bringing science news into the classroom related seminars on DNA and DNA forensics projects to criminal trials in the news.

During my exploratory session, I opened "Resource Center" and located "Carolina Tips" and "NSTA Reports," among other titles. Accessing "NSTA Reports," I found several interesting articles. I also discovered, while using the "Activities Exchange" section, that teachers had collaborated in tracking the spread of flu in the U.S. Others studied the changing of leaves in the Northeast. Two teachers now are directing their students on a project that analyzes dinosaur DNA.

In "What's News," one example of bringing science news into the classroom related seminars on DNA and DNA forensics projects to criminal trials in the news. Another involved the Ebola outbreak in Africa. Teachers and students, through *Access Excellence*, interviewed the key researchers studying Ebola. Soon to be added to *Access Excellence* is a section called "Teaching in the 21st Century," with subjects such as science education reform and using technology in the classroom.

During my surfing session, I was

continued on page 5

Low Cost Science Teaching Aids & Resources

If your adult students are concerned with news reports about water quality, MiniKit Test Kits provide an activity that ties their concerns into a lesson plan. Different kits test for oxygen, nitrite, copper, phosphate, ammonia, iron, nitrate, chlorine, and sulfide. Each kit runs ten tests of one chemical. Students immerse a sealed ampoule containing a preformulated reagent into the water. When the tip of the ampoule is snapped off, the container fills with the correct amount of water. In one minute, the student can compare the resulting color with standards provided in the kit. $12 to $14 each. Contact Chemetrics, Inc.

How to Teach with Topographic Maps by Dana Van Burgh, Elizabeth N. Lyons, and Mary Boyington uses the world of "topo" maps to link environmental studies with geology. Students use skills such as map reading, interpreting longitude, latitude, and scale, and determining terrain changes, to create a topographic map of a familiar place such as a park, school yard, or church grounds. A real United States Geological Survey is included. Available from NSTA, stock number PBO38X8, price $7.95.

Science Education Standards Now Finalized

December 1995 saw the final form publication of the National Science Education Standards. The standards can be ordered from the National Academy Press, 2101 Constitution Avenue NW, Lockbox 285, Washington, DC 20055. To order using MasterCard, VISA, or American Express, call toll-free 1-800-624-6242 (in the DC metro area, (202) 334-3313) or go to the National Academy Press bookstore at http://ww.nas.edu/nap/bookstore. The cost is $19.95 per single copy plus $4.00 shipping/handling and sales tax, and bulk discounts are available.

The National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) currently is working on Compatibility Guidelines and an Awareness Kit for the newly published standards that will help teachers put the standards to work in the classroom. The effort is being funded by the Annenberg/CPB Science and Mathematics Project. For more information, contact NSTA.

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thrilled to find *Carolina Online!* Carolina Biological Supply's new web home page (http://www.carosci.com). *Carolina Online!* gives information on receiving a catalog, new products, and articles from the popular "Carolina Tips" newsletter. Carolina's home page is linked to *Access Excellence;* I found, when I selected the opportunity to read the text of a "Carolina Tips" back issue, a simple point and click transferred me to the area of *Access Excellence* where Genentech has placed full text of "Carolina Tips" back issues. *Access Excellence* provides so many links to science related sites that it's an excellent source for novices and experts alike who are seeking ideas and information.

Cornelia Munroe is the GED Test Specialist for the Science content area at the GED Testing Service.

Science Teaching Sources:

Access Excellence, (http://www.gene.com/ae).

Carolina Biological Supply Company, 2700 York Rd., Burlington, NC 27215.

Carolina Online!, (http://www.carosci.com/)

***Compatibility Guidelines for the National Science Education Standards* (in process), National Science Teachers Association Bookstore, 1840 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22201-3000. 800-722-NSTA.**

MiniKits for Water Quality Analysis, Chemetrics, Inc., Rt. 28, Calverton, VA 22016. 800-356-3072

Teeter, Geoff, *Access Excellence* backgrounder, Genentech, Inc., 460 Point San Bruno Boulevard, South San Francisco, CA 94080.

Van Burgh, Dana, Elizabeth N. Lyons, and Mary Boyington, *How to Teach with Topographic Maps*, NSTA, Arlington, VA.

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External Diploma Program Update

For ABE Teachers: A Guide to Understanding the EDP Diagnostic

by Katherine Lowndes

As EDP sites start up across the nation, more and more ABE/GED instructors may come across adults that are in the Diagnostic Phase of the External Diploma Program (EDP). Since EDP is a total system, any adult interested in earning a diploma through the EDP must first successfully complete the Diagnostic Phase. Before an EDP applicant can move into the Assessment Phase of the program, he/she must successfully complete the three Diagnostic Instruments, which assess the adult's basic skills in math, reading, and writing. The Diagnostic assures that no adult will fail in the high school-level part of the program for lack of basic skills.

The EDP Assessment phase is the high school-level portion of the program. Here the EDP candidates must demonstrate 65 competencies and an individualized skill with 100% mastery. This portion of the program asks the adults to apply their basic skills of math, reading, and writing, as well as their higher-level thinking skills, in complex situations. The high school-level part of EDP is as rigorous as the GED and demands the same level of basic skill ability to succeed. It is not the level of difficulty that makes the assessment different, but rather the means of assessing the individual's skill.

The Diagnostic process not only helps the adults identify those basic skills that need work, but also directs these adults to existing instructional programs. The EDP advisor provides the adult with a list of potential resources that the adult could use to get help learning the missing skills. After attempting the three Diagnostic Instruments, an EDP applicant receives three "EDP Learning Recommendation Forms" listing the various specific reading, writing and math skills that need improvement. In every town where an ABE learning center exists, that center would be suggested as one possible learning resource. If the EDP learner chooses this method of learning, the EDP learner will arrive bearing these learning recommendation forms.

When you are working with an EDP applicant brushing up their basic skills, it is most effective to make use of real life simulations.

The EDP Learning Recommendations Form clearly delineates those skills that the applicant did not demonstrate in his first attempt at the Diagnostics. The adult may only need to work on one or two skills, or he may need to work on a variety of math, reading, and writing skills. The idea then is for the learner to access community resources (your ABE center), work on these skills, then go back to the EDP site and

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Two More States Join "Diploma" Ranks

As of February, 1996, Minnesota and North Dakota became the newest GED jurisdictions to change the name of the GED credential to include the word "diploma."

The other states, territories, and Canadian provinces which issue GED diplomas are listed below:

Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, West Virginia, Wisconsin, American Samoa, Guam, Kwajalein, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Alberta, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Northwest Territories, Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan

Campaign Focuses on Life-Changing Books

Shape your Future—READ! is the theme for the Center for the Book's 1995-96 reading promotion campaign. Which of these "Books That Have Shaped Readers' Lives" made a difference in your life? Which titles might you add to the list?

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Mark Twain
Atlas Shrugged, Ayn Rand
The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin
The Autobiography of Malcolm X
The Bible
The Catcher in the Rye, J.D. Salinger
Charlotte's Web, E.B. White
The Diary of a Young Girl, Anne Frank
Don Quixote, Miguel de Cervantes
Gone With the Wind, Margaret Mitchell
Hiroshima, John Hersey
How to Win Friends and Influence People, Dale Carnegie
I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings, Maya Angelou
Invisible Man, Ralph Ellison
The Little Prince, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry
Little Women, Louisa May Alcott
The Lord of the Rings, J.R.R. Tolkien
Roots, Alex Haley
The Secret Garden, Frances Hodgson Burnett
To Kill a Mockingbird, Harper Lee
Treasure Island, Robert Louis Stevenson
Walden, Henry David Thoreau
War and Peace, Leo Tolstoy
What Color is Your Parachute?, Richard Nelson Bolles

For more information, contact The Center for The Book, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20540-8200.

For GED Examiners

Do You Really Know?

Most longtime GED program staff know who to call at the GED Testing Service when they have a question. But over time, things change. People get promoted, move to a different work group, take on new responsibilities. That's been especially true over the past year at One Dupont Circle. To better serve you, the staff has expanded and duties have been redefined. Please note the new areas of responsibility when you call to ask for one of us. We'll be able to help you more quickly if you have your ten-digit Center ID number handy when you call—it's on every contract, packing slip, and invoice.

You'll be hearing about more changes in the coming months. But so far one thing's the same: we do not take telephone orders for secure materials under any circumstances.

Civilian State, Provincial, and Territorial GED Testing Centers

Address & Staff Changes	Adora Beard
Brochures, Videos, Research Reports	GED Fulfillment Service, 301-604-9073
Disabilities/Special Testing	Cathy Allin
Examiners' Meetings	Cathy Allin
Invoices (paid, duplicate, etc.)	Adora Beard
New Testing Centers	Adora Beard
Order status, testing materials	Adora Beard
Policy Questions	Fred Edwards, Cathy Allin, Kati Niemi
Returning Test Materials	Rudy Mason
Shipping Error	Rudy Mason
Special Projects	Cathy Allin
Test Compromise	Kati Niemi

DANTES, Federal Prisons, Michigan Prisons, Canadian Military, and VA Medical Centers and states which contract with GEDTS Scoring Service

Address & Staff Changes	Coni Thomas
Brochures, Videos, Research Reports	GED Fulfillment Service, 301-604-9073
Combining Test Scores	Cheryl Roberts
Invoices (paid, duplicate, etc.)	Seung Gee, Karen Nnamani
New Testing Centers	Karen Nnamani
Order status, testing materials	Stacey Reed
Transcripts	Stacey Reed, Coni Thomas, Toniece People, Cheryl Roberts

Scoring Service

Combining Scores	Cheryl Roberts
Contracting, policies	Karen Nnamani, Alice Marable
Invoices (paid, duplicate, etc.)	Seung Gee, Karen Nnamani
Essay Topic Rotation, Essay Scores, Score Reports	Cheryl Roberts, Coni Thomas
Missing Test Results	Toniece People, Coni Thomas

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successfully demonstrate those skills that he was unable to demonstrate on the first attempt. If some items are missed again, the student can return to you to work on those items only. This process continues until the EDP applicant has demonstrated sufficient basic skills to be successful in EDP assessment.

In the EDP, all the high school-level competency assessments are imbedded in real-life simulations. Therefore, when you are working with an EDP applicant brushing up their basic skills, it is most effective to make use of real life simulations rather than workbooks. For example, if a client needs help with percentages, you might use a situation of going to a restaurant, paying the bill, and calculating the tip. For adding and subtracting fractions, you could use rulers and measuring cups in real-life situations, such as doubling a recipe or building a deck.

It is not the level of difficulty that makes the [EDP] different, but rather the means of assessing the individual's skill.

The External Diploma Program currently is offered in CT, DC, IL, KY, MD, ND, NY, OR, RI, UT, VA, WI, and WV. To see if there is an EDP assessment center in your area, call your state director of adult education. Teachers can contact the EDP technical assistance line at (202) 939-9475 every Wednesday, 10:00 am-3:00 pm, Eastern time, for more information on helping an EDP learner.

Katherine Lowndes is Assistant Director of the American Council on Education's External Diploma Program.

Internet from page 1

free. Free material is most likely to be that which is in the public domain, copyright-expired, or simply government documents. You won't find the latest best-seller on the Internet, but you will find newspapers, reference materials, mail-order catalogs, movie reviews, and government publications.

What's the Catch?

If the idea of vast quantities of information on-line for free sounds too good to be true—well, you're partly right. While the benefits of using the Internet outweigh the problems, you should realize that there are traffic jams, roadblocks, potholes, and accidents just waiting to happen on the information superhighway. For example:

- The number of Internet users is increasing fast; during peak periods you may encounter delays. If you're having trouble connecting to a site, try again early in the morning, or late at night.
- Installing and using the new graphical-interface WWW programs isn't always easy. Fortunately, most commercial Internet providers supply easy-to-use installation software.
- Navigation through the Internet is not always straightforward. Trails may lead in circles and it can sometimes be difficult to find exactly what you want. There are a variety of search aids on the Internet, you can "bookmark" favorite sites, and you may find some great ones by chance, so don't despair!
- While there's a great deal of accurate, useful information available through the Internet, remember that anybody can post anything on the Internet, so check your sources!

Finally, remember that the Internet is changing daily. If you're reading this article after September 1996, you should probably toss it in the recycling bin. Call (800) 424-1616, and see if an updated Consumer Guide on the subject is available.

To get started, you'll need a personal computer, a modem (or direct link to a network), telecommunications software, a telephone line, and an Internet account.

Judith Anderson is Acting Director of the National Institute on the Education of At-Risk Students, Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), U.S. Department of Education. This article was excerpted from a Consumer Guide available on the Internet at gopher.ed.gov and http://www.ed.gov.

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1996 Cornelius P. Turner Award
Nomination Form

I. I, _____ hereby nominate the following GED graduate to be the recipient of the 1996 Cornelius P. Turner award.

Name of Nominee

Address

City State/Province ZIP/Postal Code

Telephone (Day) (Evening) Date GED diploma received

Nominator's Signature Date

Please print Name and Title

Address

City State/Province ZIP/Postal Code

Telephone (Day) (Evening)

II. Nominator's Statement: In a statement of 500 words or less, please describe the accomplishments or contributions to society the nominee has made since earning the GED that make him/her eligible for the Turner Award. Attach additional pages as necessary.

III. Nominee's Statement: In a statement of 500 words or less, please describe why you decided to pursue a GED diploma/credential and the impact it has made in your life and the lives of others. Attach additional pages as necessary.

IV. Release Statement: I am a vare that I have been nominated for the 1996 Cornelius P. Turner award and consent to the use of the information contained in this application for publicity purposes.

Nominee's Signature Date

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Stay-Home Mom from page 3

school. Even if I could successfully complete all five, he told me, I would certainly earn higher scores if I took more time. Scared and nervous, but thinking this would be my only chance, I asked if I could try, anyway; he said yes.

I jotted down the test dates and location from the poster, folded away $10 out of my grocery money and went home with my mind made up and a sense that nothing would ever be the same again.

I guess I surprised us both. Completing all five sections in under the allotted time, I did well, too, scoring above the 90 percentile rank. The examiner encouraged me to think about going on to college. I didn't think I'd ever go, but I felt brightened by his enthusiasm, as if he could see something "out there" for me that I could not.

I kept his words in the back of my mind for two years, unaware of the seed he had planted. Then, when I found my marriage foundering and it seemed that soon I would be raising my children alone, I began to seriously consider going to college. Not only did I realize that now I'd have to be able to earn more money; for the first time in my life I thought about my goals in terms of my own life—what I wanted to do. I visited the local university, learned about requirements and financial aid and, after jumping a few more hurdles like taking the ACT test, started college in the spring 1981.

In May 1987, the same year my oldest child graduated from high school, I received my bachelor's degree in political science. That August I got my first "real" job, as a paralegal with a law firm in Oceanside, California. In the time since I took that GED test I had changed in many ways—my outlook was broader, my expectations higher and my self-esteem stronger than ever before. The scared little "stay-home mom" was nowhere to be seen, and the best thing about that is that my own daughters, by watching me succeed, will never settle for that. Both are attending college right now; both are planning to do postgraduate work. Simply knowing that makes the whole thing—the work, worry, and sacrifice—worth it!

Jette Engstrom is an Executive Assistant in the American Council on Education's Division of Policy Analysis and Research. She took the GED Tests in Aurora, CO in 1979.

NALS–GED Report Now Available!

You read about it last month in Items... Now get the whole story! *The Literacy Proficiencies of GED Examinees: Results from The GED–NALS Comparison Study* contains information about the literacy skills of GED examinees as measured by the National Adult Literacy Survey. $20.00 (US) plus $5.00 shipping and handling. Ask for publication #250802.

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What's Best for Me?

by Dan Avery

It was twenty-six years ago that I quit
in my senior year. I said: "Who needs it?"
three months away from my high school
degree
but didn't I know what's best for me?
At the ripe old age of a wise seventeen
said: "To work in the world who needs that
degree?"
Then I took my first job at an old chicken
farm
shoveling their waste 'till I ached in both
arms,
not to mention the odor that followed me
home
where even my family left me alone.
So I quit that job after a three week stint.
Then my mother said: "Now, do you have a
hint
of what lies ahead and how life may be
for you in the world without that degree?"
"Well, no matter, my son, for I love you, my
dear,
but it's work or the service 'cause you're
not stayin' here."
Then I joined the Navy for a two year stint,
but without that degree I still had no hint
'till two decades later and dozens of jobs
drivin' trucks, sockin' grain, to the woods
sawin' logs.
Not once was asked: "May I see your
degree?"
So I proved that I knew what's best for me.
'Till one day I finally woke up and I said:
"All of my life I've used all but my head.
Do I know how to figure percents of my
days?
Of work versus sleep? It's all such a maze!
To figure a budget with paper and pen?
I knew I could do it somehow but when?"
After all I had done, been, lived and seen
did I truly know what's best for me?
I grew to be weary of not knowing much
of science and English, math questions and
such.
Then a caring, close friend of mine said to
me:
"If you want to go somewhere, education's
the key
to better yourself past where you are at,
you'll need to get learning under your
hat."
So adult education is showing me how
to further myself past where I am now,
by teaching me ways to split a percent
or type up a letter and budget my rent.
I'm learning computers and how they
relate

continued on page 12

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KET to Host GED Instruction Project Forum

The next GED ON TV Project Forum will be held in August, 1996. To join the mailing list ☎ 800-354-9067, e-mail: adulted@KET.org.

New GED Administrators "Get in the Saddle"

Welcome to the newest GED Administrators (responsible for testing at the jurisdiction level). Alabama: O.J. Webster ☎ (334) 242-8182. California: Robert Cervantes ☎ (916) 327-0037 (Nancy Edmunds ☎ (916) 322-8302). District of Columbia: Cynthia Bell ☎ (202) 576-6308. Idaho: Shirley Spencer ☎ (208) 334-2165. Nevada: Vicky Ramakka ☎ (702) 687-3133. Oklahoma: Linda Young ☎ (405) 521-3321. Vermont: Carol Arner ☎ (802) 828-3131. Kwajalein: Michael Davis ☎ (805) 238-7994 x1078. Marshall Islands: Dorothy Rae Nadeau ☎ (692) 625-3394. Canada Forces: Doug Pelchat ☎ (613) 996-2429. New Brunswick, French Program: Janet Higgins ☎ (506) 453-8234. Yukon: Ardys Smith ☎ (403) 668-8740.

Kassebaum's Committee Chair Open for Bidders Next Year

With Senator Nancy Kassebaum (R KS) announcing that she won't run for reelection next year, James Jeffords (R VT) becomes the senior majority member on the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources. Jeffords, considered a firm literacy supporter, has sided with Democrats in favor of earmarking funds for adult ed and literacy programs in each state's block grant.

Jeffords' chances for ascension to the chairmanship depend upon many factors. Among them, whether the Republicans retain Senate control in the next elections, whether his colleagues want to make him chair, and his personal interest in the role. While he may choose to pursue another chair, Jeffords holds less seniority on the other committees of which he's a member.

Rand Corp Says Computer Access Will be Civic Necessity

The Rand Corporation concludes from a recent study that every American ought to have an e-mail address, even if he or she doesn't own a computer. The private think tank says that people should be able to use public terminals the same way they now use public phones, and that universal e-mail access would offer social, economic and political benefits, better-informed voters, opportunities for low-income people to join the Information Age, and open venues for new businesses. Today, about 9% of U.S. homes have online access. ✉ Rand Corp., P.O. Box 2138, Santa Monica, CA 90407-2138 ☎ (310) 451-6913.

Teleconferences to Focus on LD Adults

The Correctional Education Association and the National Adult Literacy and Learning Disabilities Center will offer two teleconferences for adult educators, "Screening for Learning Disabilities in Correctional and Adult Settings" on May 17, and "Teaching the Learning Disabled in Correctional and Adult Settings" on June 7, (both 12:00–2:00 pm, EST). The teleconferences will help provide answers for educators who almost certainly have students with learning disabilities, but who may not have special education certification. ☎ (800) 783-1232.

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Call Goes Out for Turner Award Nominees

For more than 50 years, the GED Tests have offered millions of adults a second chance at a better future. Now is your chance to recognize that one-in-a-million adult learner whose contributions have made the future better for all of us.

Each year, the Cornelius P. Turner Award, named for the founder of the GED testing program, recognizes the accomplishments of one GED graduate who has made an outstanding contribution to society in one of the following areas: education, justice, health, or public or social service, and whose achievements either benefit the GED Tests directly or could not have been achieved without a GED diploma. Previous recipients include 1992 National Teacher of the Year Thomas Fleming and Carol Swain, a Professor at Princeton University.

To be considered for the Turner Award, the graduate must be nominated by a GED Administrator, a GED Examiner, a GED/ABE teacher or member of the program staff, a State Director of Adult Education, or a state or provincial Department of Education staff member. In most cases, eligible nominees would have earned their GED diploma ten or more years ago.

Please use the nomination form located on page 9. In order for the nomination to be considered, the nominee must sign the release portion of the form. Entries must be postmarked no later than April 15, 1996. Send eight (8) copies to:

Turner Award Committee
GED Testing Service
One Dupont Circle, NW
Washington, DC 20036-1163

What's Best from page 10

to find a career and math problems equate.
I had no idea that to learn was this fun,
and I've not scratched the surface. I've only begun.
Hey! don't get me wrong! This was so hard at first,
I fought and resisted 'till I thought I would burst.
This is all new to me. I forgot all I knew,
everything that I learned years ago back in school.
But my teachers are patient, forgiving, and kind
in helping unlock the keys to my mind.
Even fellow students give me a hand
when I come to a place where I don't understand.
Is saying "thank-you" enough in which to repay?
I'm so grateful for what you have taught me today!
Yes, now I DO know what's best for me
and it's only a start with my GED.

Dan Avery is a recent GED graduate living in Billings, MT. "What's Best for Me" came in first out of 1200 adult education entries in the Montana Council of Teachers of Mathematics' annual Writing in Mathematics contest.

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Recent Radio PSA Campaign Boasts Big Success Early in 1996

Public service announcements (PSAs) that feature GED graduates Waylon Jennings and Anne Murray are at the hub of the GED Testing Service's 1996 radio PSA campaign—a campaign that's shaping up to be a real winner.

According to a recent follow-up survey, 52 per cent of the radio stations that received the Anne Murray and Waylon Jennings PSAs are airing the tapes. "That's a stunning number," said Susan Porter Robinson, Director of Marketing and Outreach for the American Council on Education's Center for Adult Learning and Educational Credentials, the GED Testing Service's parent organization.

"This year's goal was to reach people in rural areas to tell them about the value and availability of the GED Tests," said Jean Lowe, Director of the GED Testing Service (GEDTS). To arrive at that end, GEDTS distributed the PSAs featuring Anne Murray and Waylon Jennings to radio stations in rural areas across the US. The smaller-market stations that were selected to reach the target audience consisted of mostly country music stations, with some soft rock, adult contemporary, and golden oldies stations as well as all-news and classic rock stations thrown in for good measure.

"Marketing people consider this type of radio PSA campaign successful if 17 per cent of the stations contacted actually schedule the tape for airplay," added Susan, "but to hit three times as many stations... think of it in terms of batting averages; 520 is pretty amazing."

Canadian-born singer Anne Murray's GED public service announcements helped launch the 1996 radio campaign down the road to success.

Beginning on January 29, 1996, North American Network, the company that handles the GED Testing Service's radio PSA placements, mailed out cassettes, scripts and business reply cards. The recipients were the targeted stations and radio networks located in the more sparsely populated areas outside the United States' major cities. Throughout the winter, those outlets that didn't mail their business reply card were contacted by telephone for information about whether they would use the PSAs, and, if so, how often the tapes would "air."

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From the Director

Prepare for the Unexpected

Jean H. Lowe

Local Chief and Alternate Examiners have to wear two hats: that of advisor, and that of police guard—a difficult combination. Another fact I always knew, but that came back to me as I met with several hundred California examiners during April, is that examiners are people who give their utmost, even though they often have roles other than simply "GED Examiner." And they always seem to give it despite limited resources. So how should they plan for emergencies? What are these emergencies? Here are some stories and questions I've heard during the year.

A Chief Examiner was working with two new proctors. The examiner seemed disoriented and inattentive. The novices questioned some of her procedures but, since they were new, they thought they should follow her lead and not step in. After the testing session, a test booklet was missing. It turned out that the examiner had a stroke early in the session and was indeed disoriented. The proctors were untrained, and so couldn't provide adequate backup. Several procedures, had they been in place, could have prevented the problem. Can you briefly list a few?

In another situation, a GED candidate suffered a heart attack. The one examiner administering the tests was the only staff person in the building. Naturally, the priority was the examinee's life, so the examiner left the room to call 911 while another examinee comforted the victim. The stricken examinee survived, but the testing session had to be canceled. Without backup supervision, the examiner couldn't be certain that some examinees hadn't taken advantage of the confusion to compare answers. All examinees had to retest later using a different form of the test. If only there had been just one more person available to help—a teacher next door; a front office worker; a custodian. Is this an issue you have faced? What plans would you recommend for ensuring help is always available?

Planning in advance often comes up when the possibility of fire is discussed. First, examiners need to coordinate with the school's fire marshall to ensure that a fire drill won't interrupt a testing session. Second, there should be an exit plan for each testing session. As much as we emphasize test security, it is obviously more important to safeguard human life. In a fire, it's the examiner's job to get everyone out of the testing center in an orderly way. It is also important, as best as circumstances allow, to secure the testing room. The testing session will have to be canceled, then resumed with different forms on another day even if you can return to the testing center and you're fairly certain that security was not breached. Do you have a plan for every location where you administer the tests?

Much of the GED program's strength lies in the work done by local Chief and Alternate Examiners. These people encourage, counsel, and guide candidates as well as administer the GED Tests. By understanding the extent of their responsibility and sharing creative solutions, examiners can find the peace of mind that will make wearing two hats—or more—just a little more comfortable.

Radio Campaign from page 1

The radio stations serving the rural areas of the U.S. vary greatly in the sophistication of their broadcast facilities, the sizes of their transmitter and audience, and number of staff members. While many indicate that they plan to play the tapes several hundred or even thousands of times, others say they'll have their announcers read the scripts over the air 20 or 40 times, rotating the GED PSAs with those mailed to them by other groups seeking "goodwill" airtime. With this information, it's possible to come up with an average number of times the PSA will run (in this case, 199 per station). The estimated number of times listeners nationwide will hear one of the announcements is 66,001,100.

In the fall, the GED Testing Service will launch a new marketing campaign featuring veteran All-Pro linebacker Reggie White.

The GED radio PSAs featuring Anne Murray, Waylon Jennings and others are now available! Request Item #251009 from the GEDTS Fulfillment Service (301) 604-9073. Each cassette is $5.00 plus shipping/handling.

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Peer Review Planning Sessions Bear Other Fruits

A series of 12 GED Examiners' meetings took place in California recently. Their goal: to develop systematic practices that would preserve the program's integrity.

The examiners, working with the state, plan to institute a periodic peer review process in which a team of examiners will visit a nearby testing center to look at the facility and procedures. In turn, the examiner being visited joins the next team, so that team membership rotates systematically. The process is designed to give examiners fresh eyes to pinpoint a center's vulnerabilities, while offering peer reviewers a chance to learn from the centers they visit. This led to the idea that teams and individuals could perform their own self-checks. Here are some of the questions suggested by the California examiners. See how you compare!

Look out for a special box

The GED program is vulnerable in the area of receiving and storing materials, so be honest as you answer! How are materials delivered to your testing center? If materials come to the mail room, do the mail staff know how to handle secure GED materials? Do they know that only the Chief Examiner, can sign for the package(s)? If you use scoring keys, do you know what to do if they don't arrive within seven days? Do you inventory materials against the packing list upon receipt? Store them in a fireproof safe or file cabinet that has a sturdy lock? Is this file used only for secure materials? Are the Chief or Alternate Examiner(s) the only one(s) with keys? Do you store scored answer booklets with secure materials? Do secure test materials stay locked up except when you are administering them?

Inventory, inventory, inventory

Do you inventory materials when you remove them from storage for administration? When you arrive at the testing room? Again after each testing session? When you return them to secure storage? Do you count all materials before examinees leave the testing room? Do you inventory all secure materials each once a month whether they've been used or not? The rule is: Inventory, Inventory, Inventory. A hot trail leads to quick retrieval!

Did you know...

Neither your secretary nor your superintendent may ever have access to secure materials.

High-risk testing sessions may require more than the 1 for 20 ratio specified in the *GED Examiner's Manual*.

More thefts take place when the candidate comes to the examiner rather than the other way around.

Pencils have been found to be popular cheating tools.

Never score tests when an examinee is present.

Never test in an isolated setting.

Be wary on testing day

You could be highly vulnerable to test loss during test administration. Do you store materials in a file box or briefcase at the testing session rather than on a desk or table? Do you have enough proctors? Is there someone you can call for help? Consider an examinee's sudden illness or yours, fire drills or fires, power failures, hallway commotion. What's your plan for each scenario?

How do you maintain control of GED examinees? Do you insist that they remain seated while you deliver tests to them? Do you refuse under any circumstances to allow examinees at your desk? Do you maintain a test log for each examinee, noting the test forms and essay topics assigned by serial number? When you distribute and collect test booklets, do you use the "fan" or "edge" method to check each one for missing pages? Do you provide all scratch paper, pens, and pencils? Do you circulate among the examinees to check that they correctly bubble in information such as the test form and format codes? That they write on the current topic? Do you actively monitor the testing room during testing, conscientiously avoiding other activities? Do you keep all examinees in the room until all materials are accounted for? Hand score tests alone and in your office?

continued on page 12

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Rapt Students Hang on Teacher's Every Word

Bradley couldn't concentrate on his work. He was thinking of leaving his wife, Samantha, for Gloria because "a man needs a woman who will look up to him." Anyway, after three years of marriage, there was no excitement left.

by Meryl Robin Becker

I didn't set out to write a book. I was teaching a vocabulary class for adults who read below a sixth grade level, both native and non-native speakers of English. I got bored with the exercises, so I made up a short romantic story using that week's vocabulary words.

Fascinated, the students got into a fiery discussion over Bradley's reasons for leaving Samantha. Does a man need a woman to look up to him? Should a man be smarter than "his" woman? Is three years too long to be married?

That was all I planned to write, but the students besieged me with questions. To keep them satisfied, I wrote another episode. Then another. Each left them hanging and brought up issues for us to discuss. How do you react to a friend in trouble? Should a man be more important to a woman than her career? How do dating customs vary in different countries?

Each week we covered one episode. The matching exercises reinforced the words and idioms that came up in the story. Students worked patiently, but what got them hooked were the story and the discussion that followed.

Samantha day

As other students and teachers heard about the story, they too became interested. Other reading groups asked to be released from class to join ours on "Samantha day." Other teachers asked what had happened to Samantha that week, including a teacher from another school who taught one of my students at night.

After 20 episodes, I brought the story to a close. Several months later, I used it again, with the same reaction. Students came to me after class, promising to keep the secret if I would let them in on what was going to happen the following week. I was on to something! People who found reading a difficult, tedious chore now were looking forward to it!

Giving it a try

Over the years, I clarified and increased the Samantha exercises. Teachers and staff members suggested that I get it published. Finally, I decided to give it a try. I looked through the adult education and ESL catalogues at my school and made a list. I met with a friend of my mother, a retired writer and textbook editor, who gave me some pointers. He told me to write a query—a letter describing the material I had to offer—to each publisher, rather than spend a lot of money sending an entire chapter to each one. If they were interested, they would ask for more.

Of the 15 publishers on my list, roughy one-third never responded. Of the other ten, about half didn't find it appropriate to their needs or had too many projects already. To those that were interested, I sent a prospectus, a sample chapter, and a table of contents.

As we wrote back and forth, one publisher emerged as the most seriously interested. Two staff editors reviewed the sample chapter. Most of the revisions the publisher requested involved additions and changes to the exercises.

Several months later, they offered me a contract. We then discussed illustration, the amount of time needed to finish the manuscript, and the target audience. Since the majority of my students were non-native speakers of English, we listed it as an ESL book, although I continue to use it with mixed groups.

I was on to something! People who found reading a difficult, tedious chore now were looking forward to it!

I also asked the publisher to come up with a way to prevent students from reading ahead. I knew from experience how eager students were to know the ending. I wanted to preserve that suspense—and the discussion and motivation it generated. The publisher came up with a solution, and we were ready to print.

One year later

An entire year passed from the date the publisher first expressed interest to the day we signed the contract. Because of my family and job responsibilities, it then took me almost a year to make the publisher's suggested additions to the manuscript. It was to be 15 months

continued on page 12

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EDP's Place in a Block Grant World

by Katherine Lowndes

Block grants appear to be the model for distribution of federal funding in the future. Moneys that now come to adult education from the federal government in dedicated funding streams will soon be distributed through state mechanisms—governors, state legislatures, or state education agencies. Block grants, so called because they consolidate current "categorical programs" into larger chunks of money earmarked for more general purposes, allow more flexibility at the state level for how the funds are distributed.

However, federal and state policy makers now will require more substantive evidence that programs are effective in preparing people for work, improving needed skills, and moving people off the entitlement rolls and into the workplace.

The EDP provides both basic skill assessment through its Diagnostic process and mastery level competency in the high school-level portfolio demonstrations.

When Rep. Bill Goodling's (R-PA) CAREERS bill and Sen. Nancy Kassebaum's (R-KS) Workforce Development Act are reconciled, the resulting legislation is likely to have a profound effect upon the way welfare, adult education, and workforce preparation programs do business. Two key issues are emphasized in both bills: the need for performance standards and accountability.

Funding Depends on Goals

Measurable goals will be much more important to program survival under a block grant system. Some goals may be "soft," including accomplishments such as being a better parent or getting a better job. However, in all cases, measurable gains—pre- and post-testing that demonstrates real improvements, high school diplomas or equivalencies earned— will take precedence over customer satisfaction in ensuring program survival in the competition for block grant dollars.

Block grants emphasize results, not processes. The plans for reform will measure program success largely in terms of economic and employment-related outcomes. Workforce development is the recurring theme: not only helping entry-level workers get their first jobs, but also preparing currently employed and transitional workers for new careers and the continuous learning that today's work environment demands.

SCANS and the EDP

The SCANS (Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills) competencies were outlined in 1993 by the Secretary of Labor to clearly define for educators the competencies needed by workers, now and in the future.

The SCANS skills included foundation competencies such as reading, writing, math, listening and speaking, as well as more complex, task-driven competencies, such as problem-solving and using resources.

As the SCANS performance indicators reflect the level of preparation required to enter and be successful in the world of work, so EDP assesses many of those same necessary skills. The EDP provides both basic skill assessment through its Diagnostic process and mastery level competency in the high school-level portfolio demonstrations.

EDP graduates demonstrate skills closely resembling the SCANS competencies both by completing the EDP portfolio and by navigating their way through the completion process. The accompanying matrix gives a brief sampling of various SCANS competencies and their EDP "counterparts."

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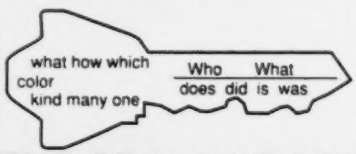

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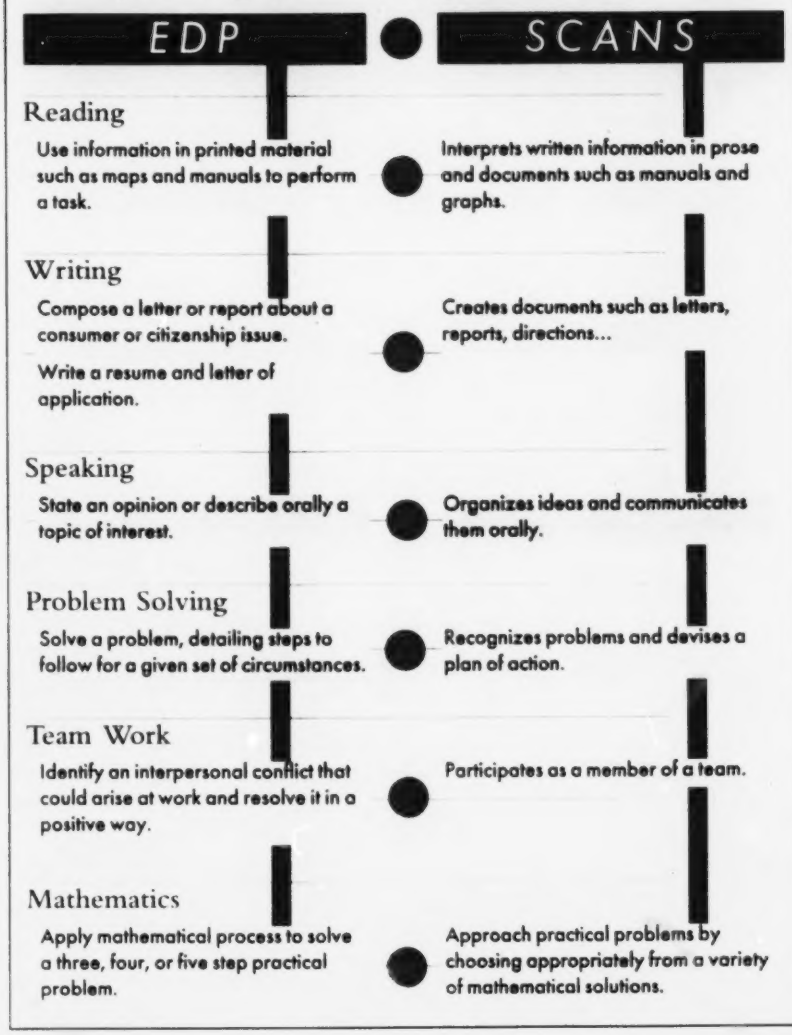
Comparing the Competencies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SCANS
Reading
Use information in printed material such as maps and manuals to perform a task.
Interprets written information in prose and documents such as manuals and graphs.
Writing
Compose a letter or report about a consumer or citizenship issue.
Write a resume and letter of application.
Creates documents such as letters, reports, directions...
Speaking
State an opinion or describe orally a topic of interest.
Organizes ideas and communicates them orally.
Problem Solving
Solve a problem, detailing steps to follow for a given set of circumstances.
Recognizes problems and devises a plan of action.
Team Work
Identify an interpersonal conflict that could arise at work and resolve it in a positive way.
Participates as a member of a team.
Mathematics
Apply mathematical process to solve a three, four, or five step practical problem.
Approach practical problems by choosing appropriately from a variety of mathematical solutions.

diploma. It is a unique system in which the adult is accountable for his or her own learning. Learning takes place in a real-world context that emphasizes the work environment. Both businesses and labor groups have embraced EDP as a system that encourages the older worker not only to earn a credential, but also to enroll in postsecondary education and training.

As the block grant world order unfolds, EDP can provide adult education programs with a means to document client success, and EDP can be a strong part of state workforce development plans, no matter who manages the distribution of moneys.

Katherine Lowndes is the Assistant Director of the American Council on Education's External Diploma Program.

For a complete list of EDP/SCANS competencies, please send a check for $5.00 made payable to ACE/EDP for the *External Diploma Program: Assessment Procedures and Sample Assessment Materials*, to Barbara Willt, 13122 Memory Lane, Fairfax, VA 22033.

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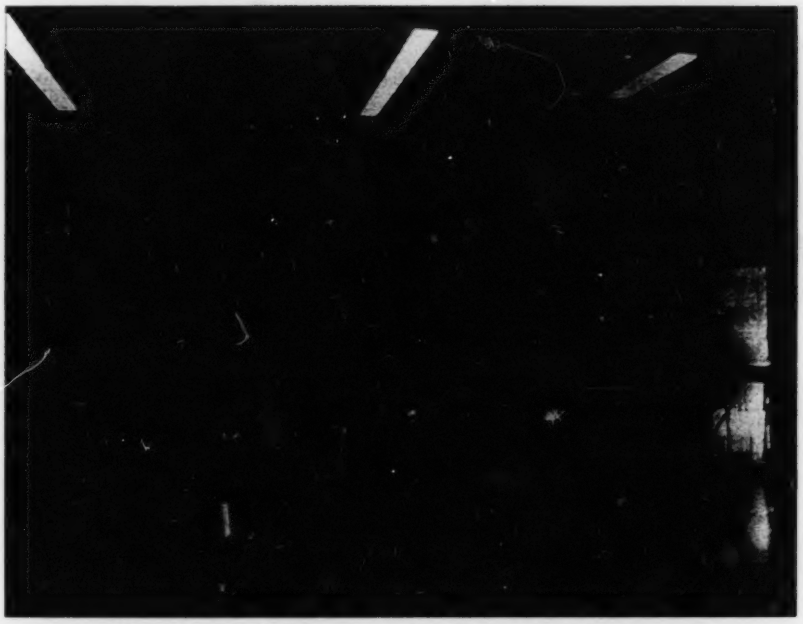
GED Graduation Ceremonies Provide Contagious Enthusiasm

A GED teacher's dream comes true

by Janet Scarpone

A few years ago, for just one semester, I had the opportunity to teach my GED and ESL classes in one of the most beautiful buildings in southern California, the Granger Music Hall. This landmark has an angelic hand-painted ceiling, beautiful round windows, a baby grand piano, and a wooden stage framed by intricate hand-carved woodwork. I simply knew that the awards ceremony I usually plan for the end of each semester would be very special in this unique setting. And was it!

The day arrived. At 7:30 a.m., a man from our school set up an elaborate sound system. To this day, I still don't know who sent him. Not long afterwards, Mayor Waters of National City arrived. Later, I found out that the groundskeeper had asked him to come. Then, up pulled a school bus. Out came the Granger Junior High School song-and-dance troupe—costume-clad and carrying props—and their piano-playing teacher. A graduate had invited them. The group opened the ceremony with several popular songs and helped hum "Pomp and Circumstance" as each capped and gowned graduate came down the aisle. To top it all off, each of the graduates got their picture taken with the mayor!



Capped and gowned, 18 of Janet Scarpone's 25 GED graduates strike a pose for the camera at Sweetwater's Graduation Day.

Back to the "Drawing Board"

After that, it was back to the classrooms for me. I continued to put together awards ceremonies at the end of each semester.

Sometimes I would team up with other instructors, and students from computer, ESL, GED & ROP classes would receive their recognition together. Still, I dreamed of a district-wide GED graduation. The Sweetwater Union High School District is large—more than 1,000 GED graduates annually. But every year, all I had to offer my GED graduates was a simple homespun ceremony held in a classroom. Until last year, when the Chief Examiner, Al Melendrez, and I began working together to put on a district-wide graduation. My dream was going to come true...and I knew just where it was going to happen!

We rented the Granger Music Hall, but this time it was so crowded that the administration decided that we would need to plan for two district-wide graduations a year. My assistant principal, Tom Teagle, and I began organizing the preparations in September. Our monthly meetings included the Chief Examiner, the GED office staff and assistant principals and counselors from each adult school site.

Meanwhile, I assigned all my students a letter-writing exercise in which they each invited President Clinton to California for our big event. I thought our weather would certainly be a persuasive factor, and, a few weeks later, I was the only teacher around with letters pouring in from the White House. Unfortunately, each one said the same thing: his job would keep the President from attending.

The planning committee decided that the nearby high school gymnasium would be big enough for us to invite the entire school, the staff

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and administration, our Assistant Superintendent, the Mayor, the Board of Trustees in addition to the friends and families of the graduates. I even invited *my* parents!

The Day Finally Arrives

The last day of the fall semester, January 26, marked our most recent graduation day. The program opened with musical selections by the Sweetwater High School Band and Eileen Peca, an ESL teacher, played "Pomp and Circumstance." Graduates entered under an arch of blue and white balloons. The Sweetwater ROTC Color Guard presented colors and a high school student sang the "Star-Spangled Banner" *acappella*. Our Principal, Liz Lebron, welcomed the crowd and Assistant Superintendent Jerry Rindone introduced the platform guests, including the Mayor. The Board of Trustees' Vice President, Greg Sandoval, delivered the message to the graduates, and I read aloud President Clinton's letter of congratulations.

Our guest speaker was José Brosz, a GED graduate who is now an Assistant Principal at nearby Southwest High School. A special award went to retired Chief Examiner Louise Caine, who instituted automated test scoring. The student speakers were Lucia Butler and Bertha Hernandez. Our principal then recognized the highest test scores and awarded five scholarships.

The diplomas were finally handed out and a reception followed. There was punch and cookies and a live band for dancing. I went home that day knowing that this exciting Graduation Day will be remembered by everyone for years to come!

Janet Scarpone lives in Solano Beach, California. She has been a teacher of college-level courses as well as GED and ESL for 21 years.

Timeline: GED Graduation Ceremony

August	Inform recent graduates that there will be a graduation ceremony the following June and encourage them to participate.
December	Do the same as above for spring semester graduates.
March	Establish a date, time, and location for the ceremony. Arrange for musical accompaniment. A local high school band is what many groups use. Send notices of the ceremony to recent and potential May GED graduates. Encourage them to participate and invite their friends and relatives. Keep a list of who is coming and how many guests they will bring. Request that they arrive half an hour ahead of time.
April	Approach local public figures and ask them to give a short speech at the ceremony. Approach the superintendent of schools or another prominent figure in state or local education and ask him or her to present the diplomas.
May	Send a press release to local newspapers and television and radio stations announcing the date, time, and location of the event. Follow up on the release to get a sense of media coverage. If graduates will be wearing academic gowns, send information about rental companies and encourage students to arrange for gown rentals early. Hire a photographer to take pictures during the ceremony. Arrange for a sound system and special lighting, if needed. Draw up a program for the ceremony and arrange to have it printed. Arrange for refreshments, if desired.
One week before	Follow up with the media. Tell them about any noteworthy graduates. Do a final tally on graduates and their guests; finalize arrangements for refreshments. Go over the ceremony with those who will be speaking, handing out diplomas, and providing music. Make sure they know what to do and how long they will be expected to participate.
Day before	Make final calls to media. Set up chairs and stage area at the graduation site.
Hours before	Set out refreshments.
Just before	Make sure everyone is in place. Explain the order of the ceremony.
Just after	Introduce reporters to students. Have photographs developed immediately and deliver them by hand to the newspapers—with captions.

For more information on the elements of planning a GED graduation ceremony, refer to Section 11 of the 1993 *GED Examiner's Manual*.

GED Graduate Story

Distance Learning Gives Young Mother a Boost

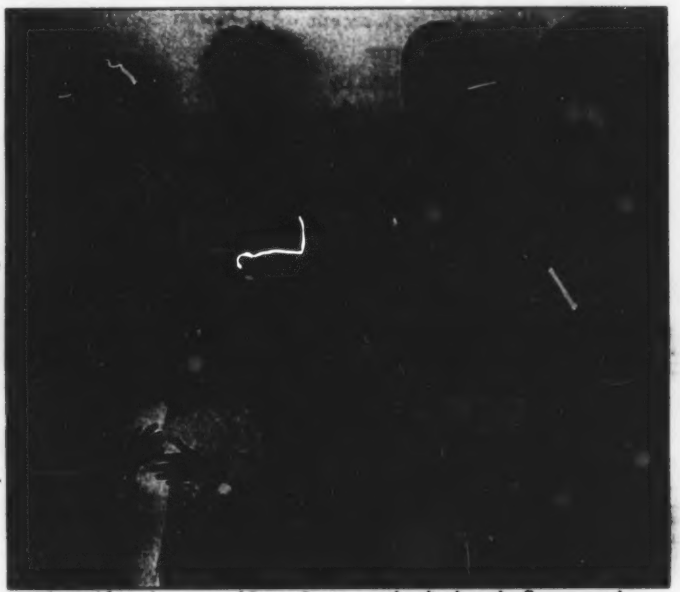
by Nancy Crutcher

Every morning Dana Porter sent her seven children off to school. Now she goes out the door with them, thanks to an innovative adult education program provided through the University of Mississippi.

"I dropped out when I was in the tenth grade because I had a baby," said Dana, now age 25. "But when I got to looking at my kids, I knew I had to go back to school for them." She is the 400th GED graduate of Jackson State University's Continuing Education Learning Center.

Dana got her start by participating in Project LEAP (Learn, Earn, and Prosper), a program in which participants improve their academic and employability skills by taking part in interactive classes broadcast by satellite to Jackson State and 47 other sites across Mississippi.

Project LEAP's curriculum can be tailored to accommodate diverse learners on an open-entry/open-exit basis. Every student is assessed using the TABE (Tests of Adult Basic Education) upon intake and receives an IEP (Individual Education Plan) based on the results. Television instructors, whose lessons are broadcast via satellite, present core curriculum on three skill levels (K-3, 4-8, and GED prep). Other components focus on career choices, interviewing skills, good work habits and family, health, and financial issues. Facilitators at each site provide individualized instruction while students may contact the TV instructors directly via toll-free phone numbers.



Family and friends surround Dana Porter, as she displays the flowers and award she received at a surprise party given in her honor by Jackson State University's GED Program.

Project LEAP is delivered to a wide range of programs throughout the United States. According to the University of Mississippi's program director, Dr. Edwin E. Meek, "LEAP allows us to bring to the most rural and isolated areas the resources that a major university has

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BIBLIOGRAPHY OF INSTRUCTIONAL MULTIMEDIA MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

For information about computer-based learning systems, where to go for help on building a multimedia system, and how to evaluate whether the software package you're looking at will meet both your specifications and the needs of your students, the **Bibliography of Instructional Multimedia Materials for Adults by Nancy Engler** is a valuable resource.

Call today to order! Each 100-page bibliography is $7.50 plus $2.50 shipping & handling. Request item #251017.

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Videoconference Links Popular Music with Content Areas

Rock music has both reflected and influenced our culture for more than 40 years. Can teachers use it to support educational goals? An upcoming conference illustrates how "rock and roll can fortify the study of not only music, but also history, geography, language arts—even science and math!" On May 8, 1996 from 3:00–5:00 pm eastern time, the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, and Cuyahoga Community College present "The Kids Are Alright...Rock & Roll, Education, & Youth Culture." Social scientists and educators will explore the interdisciplinary potential of pop music and reveal how teachers can use it to reach students more effectively. Contact the PBS Adult Learning Service ☎ (800) 257-2578 or ☛http://www.pbs.org Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, ☛http://www.rockhall.com.

GEDTS Meeting Slated for Washington DC

"Retooling for GED 2000—Focus on You" is the theme for the GED Administrator's Conference, July 11–13. Registration $50.00 for non-GED Administrators. ✉ GED Annual Conference, One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 250, Washington, DC 20036 ☎ (202) 939-9490

COABE '96 Comes to Iron City

Pittsburgh, PA plays host to COABE '96 with the theme "Inclined to Excellence." The conference takes place May 16–18 at the Lawrence Convention Center and Doubletree Hotel in downtown Pittsburgh, with preconference institutes on May 15. ✉ COABE '96 c/o Goodwill Industries, 2600 East Carson Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15203 ☎ (412) 481-4836.

Mathematics Forum Seeks Tips from ABE/GED Teachers

The Math Forum is a "virtual center for math education on the Internet." Developed at and administered by staff at Swarthmore College, near Philadelphia, the Math Forum's goal is to provide a community center for mathematics resources and information for teachers, researchers, parents, and students at all levels. The Math Forum is seeking contributions from teachers of mathematics to adult learners. Your expertise, articles, bibliographies, lesson plans, URLs for web pages, and other relevant materials are welcome! Submissions can be pasted into an email message or sent as an email enclosure. Contact Melissa Dershewitz ☎ (800) 756-7823 or ☛dersh@forum.swarthmore.edu. The Math Forum, ☛http://forum.swarthmore.edu.

New GED Administrators

Please join in welcoming the newest GED Administrators (the people responsible for the state- or province-wide GED testing program).

Florida: John Sojat ☎ (904) 488-6622; West Virginia: Pam Abston ☎ (304) 558-6315; Wyoming: Sharon Guerney ☎ (307) 777-3545; New Brunswick: Richard Corey ☎ (506) 453-2198; Saskatchewan: Jim Seiferling ☎ (306) 787-0477.

Key

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Librarians Rate Books for Adult New Readers

The Publishers Liaison Committee of PLA's Adult Lifelong Learning Section compiles Top Titles for Adult New Readers—outstanding books, fiction and nonfiction, that serve the needs of newly literate adults. Books that are selected for the list demonstrate high levels of appeal in terms of content, format, and artwork. Most titles are eighth-grade reading level or below on the Fry Readability Scale and effectively utilize simple plots, short sentences, and uncomplicated vocabulary. With the exception of classic works, the books have been published in the current calendar year or during the last half of the previous year. ☎ Laura McCaffery (219) 424-7241 ext. 2212 ☛lmccafery@everest.acpl.lib.in.us.

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Hanging continued from page

more before the book came out in print.

What got them hooked were the story and the discussion that followed.

The whole process took so long that I sometimes thought it was all a dream and my book would never be finished. Today, my students still argue over what Bradley and Samantha should do and talk about what they think will happen, but instead of reading it from a hand-written photocopy, they use a book.

*Meryl Becker teaches at Employment Connections in Chelsea, MA. **Samantha: A Soap Opera and Vocabulary Book for Students of English as a Second Language** and the accompanying Teacher's Manual are available from the University of Michigan Press, (313) 764-4392.*

GED graduate continued from page

to offer. It also enables us to customize a curriculum for specific populations."

Jacqueline Lacey, Dana's LEAP facilitator noted that, from the beginning, "Dana was very positive and determined. I di ln't have to boost her self-esteem. She already knew what she wanted—her GED."

"...when I got to looking at my kids, I knew I had to go back to school for them."

"The only difficult time," Dana said. "was getting up and getting seven kids ready and getting myself ready. Getting to class on time was an accomplishment in itself."

In January, Dana Porter entered Hinds Community College to study nursing.

Nancy Crutcher is a staff writer at the University of Mississippi.

Peer Review from page 3

Transport with care

Do you take the same care with transported tests as you do with those you administer at your home site? Are you particularly careful to take the exact number of test booklets you'll need? Have you examined the setting where you'll be administering the tests for comfort, light, and security? Is locked storage available? Do you inventory at each step of the transportation process? Are you aware that you must NEVER transport scoring keys? That all scoring must be done at your scoring site?

The preceding questions don't begin to address your other roles as a counselor, networker, and GED ambassador. They don't even cover all test security issues. However, if your system checks out against these questions, you'll be less likely to face a test compromise. How did you do?

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Welcome Ontario! Canada's Most Populous Province Begins GED Testing

Ontario's Minister of Education and Training, the Honourable John Snobelen, rewarded GED advocates on May 16, 1996 by announcing that the province would commence full-scale GED testing in Toronto June 1. In September, the program will expand to Greater Toronto, Ottawa, Windsor, Sudbury, and Thunder Bay.

At a May 30 meeting with business people and educators at the Metro Toronto Board of Trade, the minister described the GED Tests as a new adult education alternative, adding that it was time for Ontario to join the ten other provinces and territories which offer GED testing.

The Canadian GED testing program celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1994. The tests, available in both English and French, are developed separately from the U.S. Tests, reflect Canadian secondary school curriculum, and are normed on Canadian high school seniors. Testing is offered in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Northwest Territories, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan, and Yukon. The minimum age for testing in Canada, with only two exceptions, is 19.

While the GED Testing Service (GEDTS) and the Canadian GED Administrators have long held an open invitation to Canada's most populous province to join the GED "family," this year's success owes much to six people whose efforts first became visible in 1994.

This group of men and women, who came to be known affectionately as the "Ontario Six," consisted of Linda Perry and the late Ethel Anderson at the Ontario Ministry of Education; Jim Barlow from the Ontario Council for Adult Educators (OCAE) and Waterloo County Board of Education; Jack Playford of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation (OSSTF) and the Continuing

continued on page 10

Peter Kilburn, Chair of the Canadian GED Administrators' Council, presents Ontario's Minister of Education and Training, the Honourable John Snobelen, with a plaque commemorating the beginning of the Ministry's full-scale GED program. Looking on (left to right) are John Allston, Chair, and Shelagh O'Connor, Senior Analyst, both from the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto's Education Policy Committee.

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From the Director

Serving Adults with Specific Learning Disabilities

by Jean H. Lowe

I've often considered numbers boring and impersonal, but those contained in ***Who Took the GED? The GED 1995 Annual Statistical Report*** tell a story that should interest everyone associated with the GED program. As we compare the numbers with those reported for 1994, we can take pride in the program's continued overall growth. Along with other increases, special test accommodations for adults with documented specific learning disabilities (SLD) grew a whopping 31%. There's been a steady increase in this area since 1990, when we first collected this data separately.

The emphasis on improving such services got a boost from the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act, which was phased in over the ensuing two years. Our success results from the hard work of many GED Administrators, teachers, counselors and GED Examiners and their commitment to improve service to candidates with SLD.

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Jean H. Lowe, Director, GED Testing Service

But there's another way to look at these numbers. This increase still represents accommodations to less than three tenths of one percent (.26%) of all GED candidates! Some sources suggest that at least five percent of the general population have SLD; others think 10 percent is a better estimate.

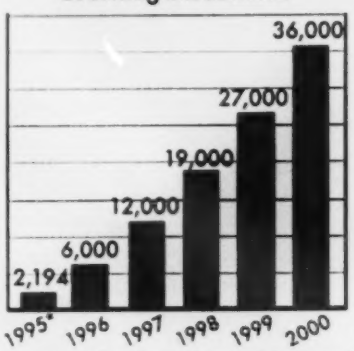
The five percent estimate translates to 36,195 examinees—a far cry from the 2,194 people who applied for special accommodations in 1995. It's clear that no matter whose estimates we use, we're missing a large segment of the population we're mandated to serve.

Modifications of standard testing conditions (extra time, a private room, a calculator, a scribe) and the use of special editions, such as the audiocassette, may be granted to individuals who provide documentation of their specific needs from a doctor or psychologist. So what are the road blocks? Naturally, we can blame a lack of resources. Time, money, staff, are in short supply for most programs and can be daunting obstacles to administering the GED Tests under special conditions. The lack of affordable diagnosticians, for most testing programs, is another big hurdle. Nevertheless, the entire GED testing program is obliged by U.S. and Canadian laws to provide special accommodations to people with documented needs, and make to the public aware that such accommodations are available.

I challenge everyone who works with the GED program to help bring these numbers up to approximately five percent of our total audience, about 36,000, by the year 2000. To get there, we must set progressive intermediate goals each year.

We'll need to drum up the diagnosis and instruction resources we don't now have by networking, making contacts in other agencies, writing grant proposals—whatever it takes. We must reconfigure the system so that providing special accommodations doesn't break our routine, but becomes part of it.

Intermediate Goals for Serving GED Candidates with Specific Learning Disabilities



*Number of candidates with SLD served

What can GEDTS do to help? We're updating and clarifying the form and process used for applying for special accommodations. Once again, we'll publish them in a small booklet for teachers, counselors, and GED candidates. A new instructional videotape will also explain the process of documenting the need for special accommodations. These low-cost materials should be in stock at our fulfillment house late this fall.

We will also make the pages of *GEDItems* available as a discussion forum on how to accomplish these goals. What must we do to make this a reality? Where have you found your triumphs? Your roadblocks? Send us your ideas so that we can share them with others. I look forward to hearing from you.

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Survey of Connecticut Businesses Finds Favorable Impressions of GED Graduates

Middletown, CT
April 15, 1996

Responses to a survey from 65 Connecticut companies and industries reveals that the companies, in general, have positive perceptions of GED graduates.

Beginning in the fall of 1993, the Connecticut Bureau of Adult Education and Training surveyed 153 personnel directors working for large businesses operating in the state. Slightly more than 42 percent (65 companies) completed and returned the survey. Analysis of the data provided the following about the participating companies:

Hire GED graduates 100%
Currently employ GED graduates 86%
Provide GED classes or other adult ed programs 58%

Most of the companies that responded have fewer than 1,000 employees. More than half of those responding (52 percent) are manufacturing sector businesses. Also represented were service companies, finance, insurance, and real estate companies, as well as retail stores and public utility companies. A small number of respondents (less than 10 percent total) fell into the categories of wholesale businesses, mining, and construction.

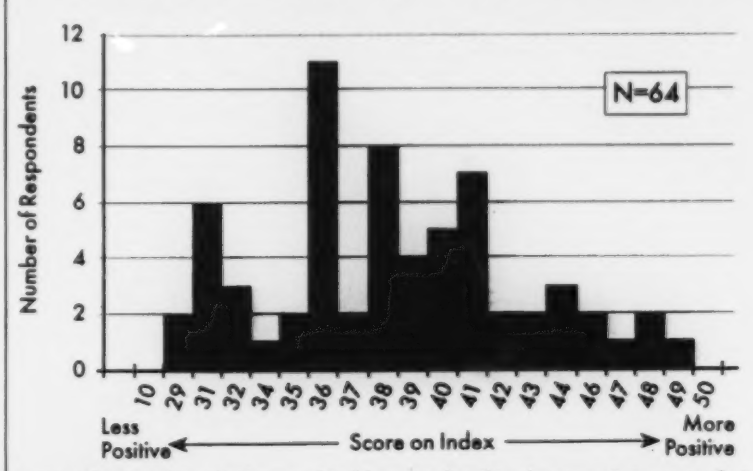
Approximately 94 percent of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that GED graduates are of "just as much value to society as high school graduates." Approximately 88 percent of the respondent disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that high school graduates make more dependable employees than GED graduates. The same number also disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that high school graduates work harder than GED graduates. In addition, about 85 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that high school graduates make a greater effort than GED graduates to "get ahead on the job."

On the less positive side, however, about 65 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that "high school graduates have better academic skills than GED graduates." Approximately 55 percent of the respondents also agreed with the statement that "high school graduates are better prepared for employment than GED graduates."

Roberta Pawloski, Chief of Connecticut's Bureau of Adult Education and Training said of the report, "Hopefully, the initial findings of this report will assist us in finding a viable solution to our need for an educated labor force and to the demands of remaining competitive in a global economy."

*A copy of the report entitled, **The GED Graduate: A View from a Connecticut Business and Industry Perspective** is available from the Connecticut Department of Education, 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown CT 06457. Contact Dr. Richard G. Wharton (860) 638-4155.*

Distribution of Survey Respondents According to Score on Index of Positive Perception of GED Graduates



Presented here are data taken from pp. 5-6 of the report describing the companies' scores on the Index of Positive Perception of GED Graduates. The mean score was 38.2 out of a possible 50, or 76 percent. Consequently, it can be said that the participating companies tended to have a more positive, rather than a less positive, perception of GED graduates. Standard deviation for these scores is 4.8. One response could not be used in this analysis.

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Re-opening a GED Testing Center After Compromise Requires Time for Re-learning

" You're just punishing us! Think of all the people who could be taking the tests and getting on with their lives!"...this is the common refrain from GED Testing Centers that are closed due to a security compromise.

by Fred Edwards

So how long *does* it take? As long as it takes to get to the bottom of the problem and to the center enact an active security plan. Sometimes it takes three months. Sometimes, after the investigation, the GED Testing Service (GEDTS) decides that a center must be closed forever.

It's important to remember that while shutting down a center where a breach has occurred may seem unfair to GED candidates, it's the investigation process that protects the tests' validity for all examinees.

Let's look at the process: it's my experience that many compromises happen when the GED Chief Examiner becomes so comfortable with the process that he becomes innovative. He begins taking "short cuts" here and there. Then one day, at the end of a testing session, it happens...a missing topic card or test booklet. Was it stolen? Was it lost? Is it just misplaced? Did someone throw it in the trash? Or "borrow" it to make a photocopy?

As soon as a security breach is discovered, the Examiner must stop all testing and notify GEDTS, the GED Administrator and the chief administrative officer (usually the college president or superintendent of schools who signs the GED Annual Contract) immediately. Valuable time is often lost because the Examiner turns the building upside down looking for the material and doesn't report the loss until all else has failed. By this time, the police find it difficult to track, the next testing session is underway, and, of course, the trash has been collected. Don't take time to re-trace steps before calling for help. The faster you take action, the greater your chance for recovering lost materials and the closer we come to resolution.

Many Chief Examiners are reluctant to share news of a security breach with their chief administrative officer. Examiners may feel that the incident reflects badly on them, or it's a waste of time. However, when a security breach occurs, you need all available resources.

The chief administrative officer can open doors and affect cooperation that might otherwise not be available to you. And she needs to hear about the test compromise from you. Just imagine for a moment the consequences if she were to hear

BLS TutorSystems pick up from March/April 1996 issue

about the security breach from a newspaper reporter!

Likewise, notifying the police is essential. If theft is suspected, the police absolutely must be called. It's true that waiting for a police report can sometimes seem to take forever. This is a serious matter considering that the cost of producing one full battery of the GED Tests exceeds $350,000. If the battery must be taken out of circulation, the cost of leasing the other batteries increases for everyone. You owe it to the other 3,499 GED Testing Centers to follow procedures to the letter.

The faster you take action, the greater your chance for recovering lost materials and the closer we come to resolution.

Another time factor is the investigation. The Chief Examiner must immediately conduct an investigation to determine the location of the missing material as well as the reason for and the extent of the loss. The resulting report is more than a "rehash" of what happened when the security breach was discovered; it's a comprehensive deposition of everything that went on before, during, and after the compromise. It includes a detailed review of all test administration procedures and security measures, start to finish.

After reading your report, GEDTS should have a clear understanding of what happened to the materials and what will be done in the future to prevent such occurrences. If it seems likely that a test or scoring stencil has been stolen, the theft must be reported to the police immediately, regardless of school policy. The police report forms part of the final report.

If it is determined that nearby centers may be affected, the Chief

continued on page 12

Ikenberry to Take Over as ACE President

Stanley O. Ikenberry, the former president of the University of Illinois, will assume office as the tenth president of the American Council on Education this coming November.

Ikenberry, 61, who now chairs the board of directors of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, succeeds Robert H. Atwell. Atwell last year announced plans to retire at the end of 1996 after 12 years at ACE's helm. The American Council on Education (ACE) is the GED Testing Service's parent organization.

Ikenberry's appointment was announced in late May following a unanimous vote by ACE's board of directors.

"Stan has a depth of experience...and knowledge of the challenges and opportunities facing education."

—Barry Munitz
ACE Board Chair

The chair of the nominating committee, ACE Board Chair Barry Munitz, who is chancellor of the California State University System, said, "Stan has a depth of experience from his leadership of one of the nation's great research universities and knowledge of the challenges and opportunities facing education."

As president of the three-campus University of Illinois from 1979 to 1995, Ikenberry transformed the university's Chicago campus into the largest, most comprehensive research university campus in the Chicago area. He also instituted major science, technology, and computer science initiatives at the Urbana-Champaign campus.

Ikenberry's previous experience also includes positions at the Pennsylvania State University, and West Virginia University, as well as Michigan State University, where he earned his M.A. and Ph.D. Ikenberry received his B.A. from Shepherd College (WV) in 1956.

For more information about this news, visit ACE's new home page ☞ ***http://www.acenet.edu.***

Janet Scarpone
new advertisement

see artwork in
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What's Going On? A Snapshot of High School Social Studies Standards

The GED Testing Service (GEDTS) is taking stock of what the states want future high school graduates to know and do by examining state content standards.

by Joyce Downey Hoover

Teachers in the states sampled in this article are in different stages of creating, distributing, and implementing their Social Studies content standards, which will shape curriculum design at the district and local levels. Boards of education in Michigan, Colorado, Oregon, Vermont, Ohio, and Delaware have endorsed their standards and are developing state assessments. Others, such as Massachusetts, Maryland, Texas, and Wisconsin, are still revising and seeking approval of their standards.

"In Process"

GEDTS' research sampling of teachers' best thinking will shape the test specifications for the next edition of the Tests of General Educational Development (GED Tests). GED plans to convene specifications committees for each test in the battery early in 1997 and to distribute the first of the new test batteries in 2002.

Among the several social studies content standards emphasized by many states, there are two that stand out: 1) Training for Responsible Citizenship, and, 2) Multidisciplinary Approach to Learning History and Social Studies.

The available standards documents show that teachers in many states continue to agree on the enduring importance of citizenship skills, knowledge, and values in social studies classes. Simultaneously, several state standards documents combine learning and using social studies themes, concepts, and contexts with concepts, skills, and settings from the sciences and humanities.

Training for Responsible Citizenship

Each of the state standards documents sampled in this article expresses a desire for high school graduates to know a great deal about U.S. history, economics, geography, and government , especially that of the 19th and 20th centuries. In addition, states expect students to hone fairly sophisticated communication and information processing skills while applying this knowledge.

The documents state that graduates should participate in the democratic process, learning about and resolving U.S. problems in every social studies class. Most frameworks say that students at the high school level should be able to analyze the nation's successes, mistakes, shortcomings and potential and be willing to get personally involved. The chart below illustrates the unanimity among the sampled states:

Why Social Studies?

Massachusetts	"to promote inquiry and independent thinking, and to empower students to become socially responsible participants in a diverse and democratic society."
Texas	to provide an "integration of social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence."
Michigan	to develop "social understanding and civic efficacy....by building four capacities....: disciplinary knowledge, thinking skills, commitment to democratic values, and citizen participation."
Colorado	because a "deep understanding of history enriches . . . students [as they] go on to take their place as stewards of the principles of a democratic society..."
Oregon	so that students may "deliberate on public issues which arise in our representative democracy and in the world by applying perspectives from the social sciences."

for more information, refer to the documents listed in **Sources**, *pp 10-11*

One of the 70 key questions that Massachusetts social studies teachers want their high school graduates to answer is "What are the rights and responsibilities of those who live in a democratic society?" As a result, their 11th and 12th graders may use their math, computer, and social studies skills in taking on this project:

"Students research and compile historical statistics showing the population, the number of Americans who were eligible to vote, the number of registered voters, and the numbers of those who actually voted in each Presidential election since the early 1800s. This data is input into a computer spreadsheet to calculate the percentages of votes for each election. Students explain variations with reference to Constitutional Amendments and political events that expanded the franchise."

Massachusetts, December 1995 draft

In Texas, secondary school teachers plan to weave seven "Basic Understandings" through each course—World, U.S., and Texas History, Government, and Economics, —to reinforce concepts and skills. One such "Basic Understanding" is that of "Citizenship," which "requires an understanding of and commitment to civic responsibilities, rights, and ethical behavior."

A Multidisciplinary Approach

Wisconsin, Vermont, Colorado and Texas teachers believe that combined teaching of the skills and knowledge inherent in various disciplines improves student learning. Adult education teachers have long been familiar with the natural effectiveness of this approach.

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction has several interesting projects underway. One called "Connecting the Curriculum" (CTC), assists classroom teachers to do and share research about their own work, connecting what's taught in English, history, geography, civics, the arts, science and mathematics courses. A member of an integrated teaching team in Milwaukee, says, "We're showing [students] that different parts of the curriculum all fit together, that there's continuity; just as there is in a company or on a job...It shows the necessity of all their subjects."

Vermont's Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities (January 1996) recommends that teachers develop tasks that illustrate "strong connections within and across the fields of knowledge." Students should practice applying skills across disciplines. For example, both the social and physical sciences require questioning, estimation, and technical writing skills.

Colorado's Model Content Standards for History (adopted September, 1995) include six broad categories of study about U.S. and World history, including chronology, inquiry, diversity, science and technology, political, and, in a link with the humanities, religious and philosophical perspectives. For example, high school graduates should not only be able to give examples of the visual arts, dance, music, theater, and architecture from the major historical periods but also explain what these expressions reveal about different societies and their developing value and belief systems.

Texas social studies teachers are also combining disciplines in their Science, Technology and Society Basic Understanding strand by getting students to examine how "advances in science and technology affect the development of society" in required courses.

Learning Across Disciplines

Course Name	Classroom Task	Connects With?
US History	debate the media's influence on modern American society	English Language Arts, Science, Arts.
Government	grasp technology's uses and limitations when using technology to gather and analyze demographic data	Science, Mathematics
World History	explore Greco-Roman, Indian, Islamic, and Chinese civilizations' technological developments	Science

from: Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, Social Studies, March 1996.

In addition, Vermont's Framework asks teachers to create interconnected assignments that have personal, community, and/or global dimensions. Students draw connections between their lives and the world beyond the classroom. One example is a student-led study of immigration patterns in a local town to learn the heritage of the local community.

Social Studies for Adult Students

Particularly relevant to GEDTS' work is Massachusetts' Social Studies teachers' desire to see social studies become an integral part of all adult education programs. "It is critical to integrate social studies instruction into all adult education programs. A significant percentage of people

continued on page 10

News and Notes

New GED Scholarships for Canada's Maritime Provinces

Persons with a GED diploma living in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia or Prince Edward Island now have access to a new scholarship for postsecondary studies.

The Atlantic region division of Atomic Energy of Canada Limited announced recently that it will fund a scholarship of $1000 in each of the three maritime provinces. The scholarships are intended to encourage and assist GED graduates who wish to pursue postsecondary studies in the areas of science and engineering. GED candidates and graduates who are interested in applying for the scholarship should contact their provincial GED Administrator for more information.

New Brunswick: Richard Corey (Gail Fox) ☎ (506) 453-8251 Nova Scotia: Paula Millman (Rose Everett) ☎ (902) 424-4227 Prince Edward Island: Parnell Garland (Vince Warner) ☎ (902) 368-4690.

Canadian GED Information To Go Online

Canada's GED Administrators agreed on June 12 to develop a GED information home page on the World Wide Web (WWW).

The information will be designed to help adult learners and instructors become aware of and informed about the GED Tests. The GED testing program in Canada currently serves about 17,000 examinees per year.

In addition to general information, there will be specific details about eligibility criteria, fees, testing schedules, application procedures,and information for contacting the GED Administrator in each province and territory.

The new GED "home page: will also provide linkages to other existing sources of information related to the GED Tests and preparatory services. In addition, new developments, profiles of successful GED graduates, and information bulletins will become more easily available to the adult education community.

The home page will be hosted by Canada's National Adult Literacy Databank (NALD), which gathers, sorts, and provides information on literacy programming, funding sources, services, contacts, events, awards, and teaching resources for the adult ed environment. Readers can access NALD's website now at: ☛ http://www.nald.ca.

More details will follow in the next issue of *GED Items.*

Ed Program Funding Moves Ahead

On June 13, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-ED marked up their FY 97 funding bill, allocating the following numbers for vocational and adult education: Vocational education (state grants), $972.75 M (million); Tech-prep, $100 M; Adult ed (state grants), $250 M. These numbers represent no change from FY 96 funding levels. The National Institute for Literacy took an $860,000 hit with a proposed allocation of $4 m. The federal School-to-Work program received a $10 M increase—$175 M each for the Departments of Labor and Education, which co-administer the program. The full committee markup is scheduled for June 20 and House floor action is expected before the July 4 recess.

The Senate, in the meantime, will be marking up their version of funding levels for these programs. The two proposals will then be reconciled in conference before the current fiscal year ends on September 30.

Compromise from page 4

Examiner must notify all test centers within a 50 mile radius to discontinue use of the compromised materials.

If it seems likely that a test or scoring stencil has been stolen, the theft must be reported to the police immediately.

Along with providing a comprehensive report to the chief administrative officer, GED Administrator and GEDTS, the testing center where the breach occurred is responsible for buying any needed replacement materials for all centers within a 50 mile radius, notifying scoring site(s), responding to GEDTS inquiries prompted by the written report, and returning all compromised materials.

The Chief Examiner is required to schedule an inspection and staff inservice training by the GED Administrator. He must also implement all the recommendations made by the GED Administrator and GEDTS after the administrator recommends re-opening the center.

The process of re-opening a center can seem drawn out. However, the time that you invest in understanding what happened in a compromise and the subsequent training pays off by preparing the center staff to provide a more secure environment that is conducive to fair testing.

Fred Edwards is the Director of Client Services at GEDTS.

Examiners are encouraged to periodically review correct procedures for operating an Official GED Testing Center, found in Section 4 of the ***1993 GED Examiner's Manual.*** *Staff inservice materials may be found in Section 10 of the manual.*

Clinton Proposes Tax Credit for Postsecondary Education

Princeton, NJ
June 10, 1996

President Clinton last week unveiled a plan aimed at ensuring that all students are able to afford at least two years of postsecondary education.

The new program, named the HOPE Scholarship Plan, would provide up to $1,500 in a refundable tax credit to full-time college students during their freshman year. A credit of $750 would be available to part-time students.

Students also would be eligible for an identical tax credit in their sophomore year if the "stay off drugs and earn at least a 'B' average in their first year," documents released by the White House say. A student convicted of a felony involving drugs would be ineligible for the credit.

Clinton announced his proposal last Tuesday [June 4] at Princeton University. The program is aimed at making two years of college as "universal as high school," he said.

The credit could be used for educational expenses at trade schools or colleges and universities. It would be indexed to inflation each year to maintain its value. However, the combined amount a student received from the tax credit and a Pell Grant could not exceed tuition expenses.

The maximum $1,500 credit would be about $300 above the national average for tuition at community colleges and would cover full tuition for 67 percent of all students attending such schools, figures from the White House show.

The HOPE program is being packaged with other Clinton proposals that would allow a tax deduction of up to $10,000 annually per family to pay for educational expenses and increase the maximum Pell Grant award by 33 percent between 1995 and 2002. A family could choose to take advantage of either the tax credit or the tax deduction, but not both.

The HOPE program would be more beneficial to low-income families who often pay little or no taxes.

The combined cost of the tax deduction and credit programs is expected to come to $42.9 billion over six years. The president's proposed fiscal 1997 budget, submitted earlier this year, provided savings of $35 billion to pay for the deduction alone. Addition of the tax credit would up the cost by $7.9 billion, estimates show. The additional money would be gathered by reinstating and increasing fees on departing international airline flights ($2.3 billion), closing a corporate tax loophole that would increase taxes on some export income ($3.5 billion), and auctioning parts of the radio spectrum ($2.1 billion).

In addition, the cost of the deduction would be reduced by tightening eligibility. Previously, it would have been phased out for joint filers with incomes between $100,000 and $120,000, but now it would end for those earning $100,000 annually. The phase-out level for single filers would be reduced from $90,000 to $70,000.

This article appeared in the June 10, 1996 edition of ***Higher Education and National Affairs*** *(ISSN 0018-1579, Vol.45, No.11), which is published by the American Council on Education.*

President Outlines Tuition Benefits

Excerpts from the commencement address at Princeton University:

"We're not only saying to children from very poor families who think they would never be able to go to college, people who may not have stellar academic records in high school, if you're willing to work hard and take a chance, you can at least go to your local community college and we'll pay for the first year. If you're in your 20s and you're already working, but you can't move ahead on a high school diploma, now you can go back to college. If you're a mother planning to go to work, but you're afraid you don't have the skills to get a good job, you can go to college. If you're 40 and you're worried that you need more education to support your family, now you can go part-time, you can go at night. By all means, go to college and we'll pay the tuition...

"Fifteen years ago the typical worker with a college degree made 38% more than a worker with a high school diploma. Today, that figure is 73%..."

Over half the new jobs created in the last three years have been managerial and professional jobs. The new jobs require higher-level skills. Fifteen years ago the typical worker with a college degree made 38 percent more than a worker with a high school diploma. Today, that figure is 73 percent more. Two years of college means a 20-percent increase in annual earnings."

Ontario from page 1

Education School Board Administrators (CESBA); Dale Shuttleworth of the Centre for Community and Economic Renewal; and John Allston, from the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto.

These individuals studied the GED Testing Service and attended GED Administrators' Conferences and GED Advisory Committee meetings, eventually becoming knowledgeable and outspoken advocates for the GED Tests as an alternative educational service for Ontario's adult learners.

Over the past several years, former GEDTS Director Doug Whitney, current Director Jean Lowe, and Peter Kilburn, New Brunswick's GED Administrator and Chair of the Canadian GED Administrators Council, made several presentations to groups of adult educators and business people in Ontario explaining the purpose of the GED Tests and how the program works in other jurisdictions.

The "Ontario Six," along with many other Ontario educators, worked with school boards, teacher federations, adult educators, and businesses in developing a groundswell of support for the GED Tests. In 1994, John Allston secured the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto's support for the GED Tests, sending a clear message that employers would accept it as a high school credential when hiring.

Continuing dialogue with GEDTS and the Canadian GED leadership, as well as a pilot program, initiated by Dr. Shuttleworth in 1995 and supported by the Ministry, provided an opportunity for the groups involved to evaluate the GED Tests from several angles. The pilot program served more than 300 adult learners, each of whom were required to meet entrance criteria and participate in a review program.

The advent of full-scale GED testing in Ontario, comes as result of several factors: 1) the gradual replacing of negative GED myths with appropriate information; 2) the demand for the service, evident from the hundreds of inquiries by potential GED candidates; 3) the positive support offered by adult educators, businesses, and community groups; 4) the Ministry of Education and Training's recognition of the GED Tests as a valid and useful service for adults.

Many people contributed to the implementation of GED testing in Ontario and must be pleased by this "good news" story, but the real winners are the adults of Ontario who haven't yet completed their high school education.

Ontario's new GED Administrator is Teresa Gonzáles of the Ministry's Independent Learning Centre.

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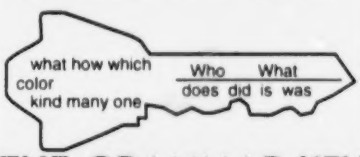

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Standards from page 7

Teachers...continue to agree on the enduring importance of citizenship skills, knowledge, and values in social studies classes.

enrolled in these programs are either recent immigrants...or are adults who have not had full opportunities to participate in the democratic process,seeking citizenship, including voting... Social Studies instruction in adult education is key to increase the percentage of adults who are responsible participants in this democratic society."

To support work to that end, to make social studies an integral part of all adult education programs, to join in useful research with our colleagues, and to guide to our test specifications committees, GEDTS will publish our research findings on the state standards in early 1997.

Joyce Downey Hoover is the GED Test Specialist for Social Studies.

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WHO TOOK THE GED TESTS?

Where do you go to find out how many adults took and passed the GED Tests last year, where they live, their ages and backgrounds? For those who want a complete picture of the GED test-taking population, **Who Took the GED? The 1995 Annual Statistical Report** is a valuable resource. It includes summaries and highlights of testing data and trends going back to 1949.

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Pipe and Drum Corps Honored for Service to Adult Ed

by Connie Davis

Since 1982, a group of bagpipers and drummers have lead graduates of Juneau (AK) Adult Education, a division of the SouthEast Regional Resource Center (SERRC), down the aisle to claim their certificates and awards. The striking entrance stirs hundreds of hearts as friends and relatives wait to celebrate the adult learners' accomplishments.

The Stroller White Pipes and Drums, founded in nearby Douglas, take their name from a newspaperman of the gold rush era. Elmer White, whom locals nicknamed "the stroller," wrote a popular column in Juneau's *The Stroller's Weekly* for many years.

The Stroller White Pipes and Drums of Juneau, Alaska, open the annual award ceremony at Juneau Adult Education Center.

GED Administrator Connie Munro first invited the corps to take part in the graduation ceremonies while she was Adult Education Coordinator of SERRC. At this year's ceremony. Ms. Munro, who will retire this year, was present to confer the GED certificates to the graduates in Juneau. She also commended the Stroller White corps' community spirit, presenting them with a certificate and a donation towards costumes and equipment.

This year, 293 adults completed high school by passing the GED Tests at SERRC.

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GED Team Drafts New Player

NFL's Reggie White and family get behind the GED program with a new public service announcement.

by Richard Kraus

When you think of the Green Bay Packers' Reggie White, what comes to mind? If you picture a 6'5", 300-pound defensive lineman, then you don't know enough about the "Minister of Defense."

On the field, Reggie White breaks through walls of offensive linemen to collar opposing team quarterbacks and bring them to the ground. Off the field, White is a religious man who takes on the forces of racism and works to build up the economic structure of the inner city.

The GED Testing Service is pleased to have Reggie White and his family join our team bringing his message of hope to adult Americans who want a second chance at a high school diploma.

Reggie White's life story is a profile of a young man on a mission to improve the lives of others in his community. During White's youth, sports played an important role but athletic accomplishments were balanced with his faith.

In high school, Reggie White walked the halls with a Bible in his hands and by age 17 was preaching in his local church and working towards a minister's license. White admits, "I didn't experience the stuff that these kids are experiencing today." But now that he's in a position to make a difference, Reggie White is doing all he can.

White began his professional football career with the Memphis Showboats of the USFL. The Philadelphia Eagles' then-coach, Marion Campbell, who had been watching White's career develop, persuaded the Eagles organization to bring him to Philadelphia in the 1985 NFL draft. Reggie White soon became the NFL's all-time "sack" leader. For Reggie White, though, the distinction he was earning because of his impressive statistics was a means toward an end.

Before long, he had organized a group of his teammates to minister to people in the city's economically depressed areas. White knew his fame meant that "more people would be listening" as he spread his message of defeating racism and bringing economic stability to the black community.

Now with the Green Bay Packers, White says he's on the verge of breakthroughs on several fronts. Firmly established as the NFL's career sack leader, and with his team close to another lifelong dream—the

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Fact: All Forms of the GED Tests are Equally Difficult!

by Jean H. Lowe

GED Legend

If you list on your GED application that you dropped out of school in 6th grade rather than in the 10th, they will give you an "easier" form of the GED Tests.

GED Fact

There is no such thing as an "easier" form of the GED Tests. All forms of the test are equally difficult and are assigned according to planned rotation schedules, not an individual's educational level. They are "easy" only when you have full mastery of the knowledge and skills the tests are measuring.

Did you ever hear of "urban legends?" Like the fables about alligators in New York City's sewers and the nearly nonexistent 20-minute commute, urban legends are stories that many people believe to be true, having heard them from a "friend of a friend of a friend" who "saw," "heard," or "experienced" an event that, under other circumstances, would be completely unbelievable. These legends are often entertaining, but, as with the "GED legend" described above, that recently found its way back to us, they are NOT TRUE!

It is important that GED Examiners and GED teachers correct such misconceptions about the GED Tests for students and candidates. But they also need to ensure that people who are new to the program are not taken in by far-fetched ideas. Most importantly, the public must understand that passing the GED Tests is an achievement that leads to a valuable credential. There is no "GED Light." The GED Tests are a rigorous measure of an individual's present knowledge and skills no matter where those skills were acquired.

The GED Tests...are "easy" only when you have full mastery of the knowledge and skills the tests are measuring.

GED Legend

You have met a higher standard in a state, province or territory that awards a GED Diploma than one that awards a GED certificate.

GED Fact

Until January 1, 1997, jurisdictions have allowed widely varying passing scores on the GED Tests, but the score level has never been correlated with the credential's title. This misconception is perpetuated largely by U.S. military recruiters. Beginning in January (see related article, page 6), all states, provinces, and territories will require minimum scores of 40 on each test and an average of 45 on the entire test battery. Although two U.S. states and all Canadian provinces will require slightly higher scores, all jurisdictions will use tests of the same difficulty.

The rationale behind a credential's title, whether it is a "certificate" or a "diploma," is most often based on political reasons—beliefs about what should be called a diploma, competition with other adult education programs, and so on.

The GED Tests are available in many different forms, but all forms cover the same curriculum areas, meet the same specifications, and are normed on graduating high school seniors. They are equally difficult everywhere in the world!

If you hear or read a statement that you think might be a GED legend, please call your GED Administrator or call Clarice Ulu here at the GED Testing Service (202) 939-9490. We want you to know the truth.

Jean Lowe is the Director of the GED Testing Service of the American Council on Education.

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Star School Awards to Boost Adult Learning

Nearly $9 million in Star Schools grants awarded in August will provide new opportunities for adults to strengthen their literacy skills and educational background via distance learning.

The Star Schools Program is administered by the Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) and provides three grants totaling $8.9 million to advance adult literacy, secondary school completion and competency in core subjects.

President Clinton said the grants complement his call for students of all ages to get the skills and education to participate in the information explosion. "These grants represent the wave of the future by enabling lifelong learning via satellite from sites all over the country," Clinton said. "This increases the learning opportunities for students of all ages to benefit from advanced technology and access to the information superhighway."

The Star Schools program encourages improved instruction in various subject areas to underserved populations through the use of telecommunications technology.

Authorized by part B of Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Star Schools funding goes toward the costs of producing courses and curriculum modules and transmitting them to schools that cannot provide local instructors, or to groups planning innovative educational activities.

"We're trying to build the technology highway right up to the front door of every school in America," Riley said. "These grants open doors for adults who want to continue their education or return and get their diploma or GED."

Three recipients will use a variety of technologies, including CD ROM, satellite telecast, and computer networks to deliver instructional programs focusing on adult literacy, school completion, and continuing education.

The three recipients of this year's Star Schools awards are: the University of Nebraska at Lincoln School CLASS Project, Educational Service District 101 Pacific Adult Literacy Project, and the Public Broadcasting Service's LiteracyLink program.

The Star Schools program encourages improved instruction in various subject areas to underserved populations through the use of telecommunications technology.

The CLASS project will broaden access to educational opportunities by giving each student access to interactive, flexible course materials such as data, graphics, and video material and incorporating electronic interaction between the student and other students, teachers, and external resources. Project funding, set at just under $3 million, will go toward development of the curriculum elements and construction of an

continued on page 16

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GED Administrators Consider Program, Policy Needs for Future

GED program leadership from across the U.S. and Canada and their territories gathered for the annual conference in Washington, D.C., July 10–13. Many of the broader issues addressed at the conference related to plans for the next generation of GED Tests, which are slated for distribution in the year 2002. Participants looked at ways to implement computer technology to improve test development, security, scoring, score-reporting and record-keeping.

Members of the GED Test Development Unit reported on their research into current trends in high school curriculum reform across the U.S. and how these changes may affect the content, format and context of the next generation of GED Tests. Although the development of standards varies by subject area and by state, the panelists noted that high school curricula may soon include advanced mathematical functions, use of computers in school work, multi-disciplinary studies, and interpretation of photography, broadcast media, music, and film. A similar review of Canadian educational reform is slated for early 1997.

A "town meeting" provided a forum for program administrators to share ideas and develop solutions to challenges they face in the coming year. In 1997, the program-wide minimum passing score will go up to "a minimum standard score of 40 on each test in the battery and an average standard score of at least 45" on the entire GED Test battery, a standard met by approximately 66% of graduating high school seniors. Slightly more than a third of U.S. states and territories and 91% of Canadian provinces now use a standard that meets or exceeds the new minimum. This year's decision to end use of the GED Tests with in-school, at-risk youth will also impact program operations in several states.

continued on page 5, column 2

Connie Munro, who retired as Alaska's GED Administrator this year, and Annie Berrios, GED Administrator for Puerto Rico, enjoy a reception at the U.S. Department of State.

The GED Scoring Model: "Is it Broke?"

GED Administrators considered issues and concerns relating to the current GED score scale by asking the question "Is it broke?" As moderator of the session, the GED Testing Service's new Director of Psychometric Services, Douglas F. Becker, Ph.D., presented examples from his experience working with testing programs that had changed their score reporting scales. In addition, Dr. Becker outlined their very specific reasons for making the changes.

Panelists at the session were Douglas R. Whitney, Ph.D., Dean of Assessment, Regents College, and former Director of the GED Testing Service, and Marjorie Mastie, Chief Examiner, Washtenaw Intermediate School District, Ann Arbor, MI.

Dr. Whitney, drawing on his experience with GED as well as his current work with the New York State Regents' Exams, raised fundamental questions: What is purpose of the score reporting system? Who are the target audiences? About what do these audiences need to be informed? Ms. Mastie, the Chief Examiner at a GED Testing Center in a large urban program, shared a "from the trenches" view, based on her work with adult learners, teachers, and admissions counselors.

These combined viewpoints provided a dimensionality to the issue which fostered a very lively dis-

continued on page 5, column 1

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cussion. GED Administrators from the U.S., Canada, and their territories grew animated as they debated such points as: whether replacing the percentile rank with class rank would make more sense to the users, how might we provide diagnostic feedback to examinees indicating their areas of relative strength and weakness, and what research could be done into developing a scale of letter grades or grade point average indicator to score reports.

Although, participants concluded, the score scale is not "broke," GEDTS could report more useful information within the limits of maintaining the validity, reliability, and integrity of the score reports. To create score reports that better meet the needs of GED examinees, instructors, testing staff, and admissions counselors, the GED Testing Service must know what those needs are. Now is the time to address score scale and score reporting issues!

People who use GED score reports in their work with adult learners are encouraged to contact Doug Becker at (202) 939-9490, email: doug_becker@ace.nche.edu with comments, questions, and concerns.

Cathy Erwin, center, receives the 1996 Distinguished Service Award for her work administering the GED testing program in Texas. Presenting the award are Jean Lowe and Fred Edwards of GEDTS.

GED Administrators, from page 4

One the most stimulating and informative sessions focused on improving outreach for adults with specific learning disabilities. Between five and 10 per cent of the general population may have specific learning disabilities (SLD); adults who didn't finish high school are thought to have a higher rate of SLD. People with documented learning disabilities are entitled to testing accommodations under U.S. and Canadian law. Some professionals suspect that many eligible candidates remain unidentified. The session covered the neurophysiological nature of learning disabilities as well as ways of identifying sources for linking the applicant with evaluation and instructional resources that will enable them to demonstrate their true abilities on the GED Tests, at work, and in college.

Participants also applied and interpreted the criteria for special testing accommodations in a case study workshop. Over the coming years, the GED Testing Service will be working hard with GED Administrators and local program staff to expand service to adults with learning disabilities.

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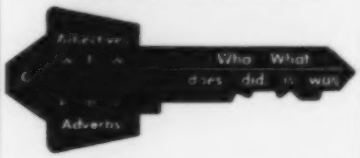

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Minimum Score Standard Will Rise for Many Jurisdictions When New Year Bells Toll

Beginning January 1, 1997, the passing score standard for the GED Tests will be a minimum standard score of 40 on each test AND an average standard score of 45. This standard is currently met by 66% of graduating high school seniors. Each province, state, or territory may establish its own minimum requirement, as long as it meets or exceeds the 40 and 45 minimum standard.

Candidates who have not completed all five tests in the battery, or whose partial scores do not meet the new standard, must meet the new standard if testing is to be completed after January 1, 1997.

At the GED Testing Service, we have received many inquiries relating to this issue. The following are some answers to common questions that may clarify what the change means for those who live in a jurisdiction where the minimum score standard will soon be more rigorous than the present standard.

Q: What if my state does not get all those tests taken in December scored before January 1?

A: Not a problem. The date determining the score standard is the date on which all five tests in the battery were completed. There may be a scoring backlog, but, if you are operating in a state that is changing its passing score requirements, the old standard will apply to all examinees who completed testing on or before December 31, 1996.

Q: Can anyone who began testing before January 1, 1997, be "grandfathered in?"

A: No, only those who successfully meet all score requirements on or before December 31, 1996. All candidates who have not completed all five tests in the battery, or whose partial scores do not meet the new standard, must meet the new standard if testing is to be completed after January 1, 1997.

Q: Can an examinee apply test scores earned before 1997 toward meeting the new standard?

A: Of course. If an examinee earned a standard score of 40 or above on any of the five tests before January 1, those scores can be carried forward and combined with scores earned later. However, the combined score must total 225 or more (average standard score of 45) in order to meet the new standard. Check with the GED Administrator for your jurisdiction to learn how long an individual's test scores are retained.

If you have a question about how the new minimum score standards will affect your work as a GED student, instructor, program director, or testing staff member, please call your state, provincial, or territorial GED Administrator or contact the GED Testing Service at (202) 939-9490.

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Native American Anthropologist Uses Education to Preserve, Document Culture

This year's recipient of the Cornelius B. Turner Award is Nora Marks Dauenhauer, of Alaska, who grew up in the nomadic fishing and hunting culture of the Tlingit people.

Born in 1927, Nora Marks Dauenhauer spent much of her childhood in Juneau and Hoonah as well as on the family fishing boat and on subsistence sites around Icy Straits, Glacier Bay, and Cape Spencer, Alaska.

Nora's first language is Tlingit, so it wasn't until she was enrolled in public school that she began to learn English. Years later, as the mother of four school-age children, Nora decided to study for the GED Tests because the credential would make it possible for her to attend college and earn the degree she would need to formally continue her research of Tlingit culture.

As many other adult learners can attest, it was a busy time of juggling priorities, but Nora knew that her education was as important as anything else she could do for her children. "I hoped it would set an example for them," she says, "that education is a life long process and is necessary in any culture."

After earning her GED diploma in 1970, Nora authored the first Tlingit-English dictionary. She later earned her BA in Anthropology in 1976 from Alaska Methodist University. This marked the beginning of scholarly collaboration with her husband, Richard Dauenhauer, Alaska's former poet laureate. The two are widely published, both together and individually, in academic and professional journals.

Nora Marks Dauenhauer is now an internationally known researcher and author on Arctic Native American culture and widely recognized for her fieldwork, transcription, translation and explication of Tlingit oral literature. Since 1983, she has been the Principal Researcher in Language and Cultural Studies at Sealaska Heritage Foundation in Juneau.

Nora Marks Dauenhauer, wearing traditional Tlingit ceremonial dress, accepts the Cornelius B. Turner Award from Jean Lowe, Director of the GED Testing Service. The award ceremony took place during 1996 GED Administrators' Conference in Washington, D.C.

From 1978 to 1981, Nora served as a Commissioner on the Alaska Historical Commission. Nora was named the 1980 Humanitarian of the Year by the Alaska Humanities Forum. In 1989, she received the Alaska Governor's Award for the Arts and in 1991, the prestigious American Book Award.

The 70-year old anthropologist continues her work in Juneau and also participates in adult education outreach efforts.

Previous recipients of the Cornelius B. Turner Award include Carol M. Swain, Ph.D., now a professor at Princeton University, and 1992 National Teacher of the Year Thomas Fleming.

To be considered for the Turner Award, the graduate must be a person who, since having earned a GED, has made outstanding, widely-recognized contributions to society. The nominee's contributions must be in education, justice, health, or public or social service. His or her achievements must be ones that either benefit the GED program directly or could not have been achieved without a GED diploma.

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The Origin of the Species: A Brief History of Written Assessment

by Arthur M. Halbrook

Every day, students are required to write essays on given topics. And, whether the essay is written in a classroom setting or administered as part of a large-scale assessment program such as the GED Tests, someone has to score the essay. But is the essay examination something new? Is holistic scoring a twentieth century creation? Is, in fact, teaching written composition a new concept?

As early as 1845, written examinations were used in the United States as assessment instruments. These examinations, first employed by the Boston English Classical School provided "an expedient means" to evaluate academic performance. Horace Mann, the great educator, praised the use of written assessment for determining whether students were "faithfully and competently taught."

The greatest impact of this "new" assessment instrument was felt several decades later in an institutional response to fighting "ignorance" of grammatical rules—the English composition course. Ironically enough, the source of the now infamous composition course can be traced to Charles Eliot, who, as President of Harvard University in 1873, argued that student writing on the whole displayed not only "bad spelling" but also "incorrectness as well as inelegance of expression." As a result, the university incorporated a required written composition course into the curriculum that even today serves as a basis for assessing student performance. Interestingly, several years after the course was instituted, a professor asked his students to write an extended prose piece on "What I Did on My Summer Vacation." The academic world was forever changed.

But how best to evaluate the written compositions? In 1912, M.B. Hillegas pioneered efforts to assess essays using multiple raters. However, unlike the present GED scale which has a range of six scores (see box, opposite page), Hillegas endorsed a 1,000 point scale.

Horace Mann, the great educator, praised the use of written assessment for determining whether students were "faithfully and competently taught."

Although correct mechanics and syntax represented important evaluation criteria, Hillegas also placed substantial emphasis on the academic focus of the compositions. In other words, whereas a eulogy to Joan of Arc received a score of 937 and a description of the Venus de Milo a score of 838, compositions which viewed "books and school and all things academic in an irreverent or otherwise unfavorable light" were assigned much lower scores.

Compared to the six point rubric (scoring model) that forms the basis for GED essay scoring, the 1,000 points certainly allowed considerable latitude for reader discretion. I doubt quite seriously if two GED essay readers would ever debate whether a certain essay was worth 556 points or 557 points. Yet, one must wonder how much that 1,000 point scoring rubric weighed.

Zelma Huxtable, writing in 1929, concluded that "the teaching of grammar, mechanics of punctuation, and spelling is emphasized almost to the complete neglect of the thoughts to be expressed." Huxtable would never be nominated as Ms. Back-to-Basics for the early 20th century. Nonetheless, in viewing the essay as a synthesis of product and intellect, she is credited with organizing one of the first evaluation models. Her model incorporated five categories, or "levels of thought complexity":

1. Inarticulate thought
2. Unrelated thoughts on plane of mere sensory perception
3. Related thought on plane of mere sensory perception
4. Reflective thoughts
5. Creative thinking

In applying her model, Huxtable concluded that an "unquestionable general correlation" existed between IQ levels and complexity of thought. However, her ratings evidenced a serious bias towards those compositions which made a "real contribution to literature" through "original reflective excellence."

If Huxtable's categories were given to GED essay readers, many of these readers would be likely to disagree with them. However, these

continued on page 13

The GED Essay Scoring Guide ... defines the characteristics that papers exhibit regardless of the topic of the paper

Upper-half papers make clear a definite purpose, pursued with varying degrees of effectiveness. They also have a structure that shows evidence of deliberate planning. The writer's control of the conventions of Standard Written English ranges from fairly reliable at 4 to confident and accomplished at 6.

Lower-half papers either fail to convey a purpose sufficiently or lack one entirely. Consequently, their structure ranges from rudimentary at 3, to random at 2, to absent at 1. Control of the conventions of Standard Written English tends to follow this same gradient.

6 The paper offers sophisticated ideas within an organizational framework that is clear and appropriate for the topic. The supporting statements are particularly effective because of their substance, specificity, or illustrative quality. The writing is vivid and precise, although it may contain an occasional flaw in the conventions of Standard Written English (spelling, punctuation, grammar, word choice, and sentence structure).

5 The paper is clearly organized with effective support for each of the writer's major points. While the writing offers substantive ideas, it lacks the fluency found in the 6 paper. Although there are some errors, the conventions of Standard Written English are consistently under control.

4 The paper shows evidence of the writer's organizational plan. Support, though adequate, tends to be less extensive or effective than that found in the 5 paper. The writer generally observes the conventions of Standard Written English. The errors that are present are not severe enough to interfere significantly with the writer's main purpose.

3 The paper usually shows some evidence of planning, although the development may be insufficient. The supporting statements may be limited to a listing or a repetition of ideas. The 3 paper often demonstrates the writer's repeated weaknesses in the conventions of Standard Written English.

2 The paper is characterized by a marked lack of organization or by inadequate support for ideas. The development may be superficial or unfocused. Errors in the conventions of Standard Written English may seriously interfere with the overall effectiveness of this paper.

1 The paper lacks purpose or development. The dominant feature is the absence of control of structure and absence of the conventions of Standard Written English. The deficiencies are so severe that the writer's ideas are difficult or impossible to understand.

** Papers that are blank, illegible, written on a topic other than the one assigned, or which have been copied from another source cannot be scored.*

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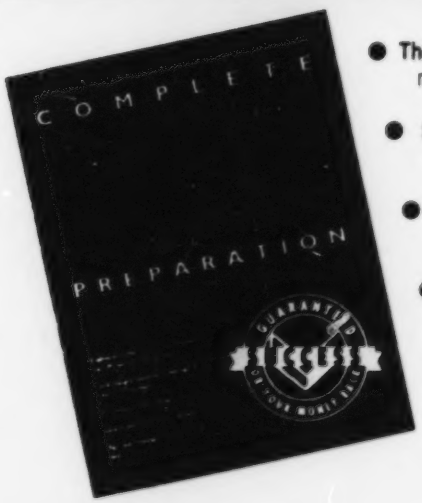

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AECL Establishes Science, Engineering Scholarships for GED Grads

by Julie Beaulieu

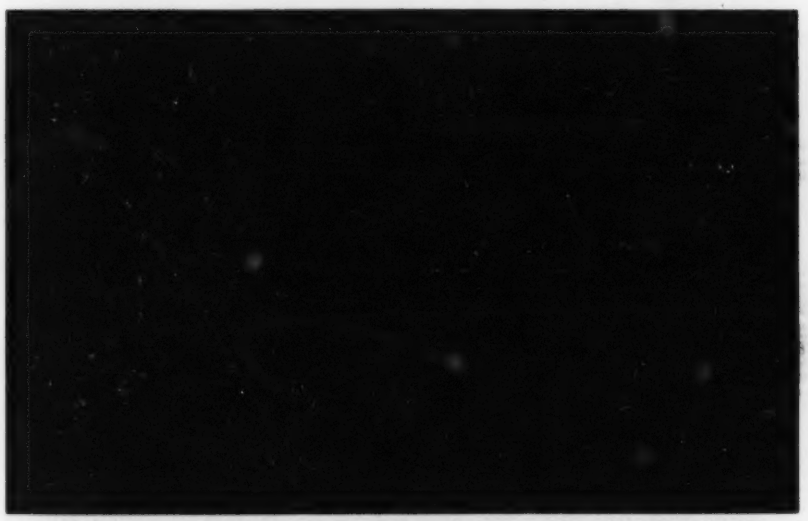
As part of a new education program, Atomic Energy Canada, Ltd. (AECL), Atlantic Region, will donate $3,000 in scholarships each year to GED graduates. A scholarship of $1,000 will be awarded to assist one GED graduate from each of Canada's Maritime provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island to pursue further postsecondary studies in science and/or engineering.

New Brunswick's Premier, Frank McKenna, remarked, "I have to commend AECL for introducing and participating in this innovative scholarship. It's gratifying to have partners like AECL join us in pursuit of higher learning."

AECL hopes to encourage all GED recipients to pursue postsecondary education in science and engineering programs. These scholarships will enable many students to pursue careers in these exciting fields. The Minister of Advanced Education and Labour of New Brunswick, the Hon. R.J. ("Roly") MacIntyre said that he was delighted that AECL is taking such an active role in helping students pursue postsecondary studies.

Peter Kilburn, Chairman of the Council of Canadian GED Administrators, praised AECL for this support: "AECL's donation is a fine example of corporate leadership. It represents a very significant help to a group of individuals who don't have access to conventional scholarships."

Clair Ripley, AECL's Coordinator of Educational Programs for the Atlantic Region, noted that AECL's scholarships to GED graduates set a precedent not only in the Maritimes but for all of Canada. "The average GED graduate [in Canada]," he remarked, " is over 30 years of age and often with family obligations. Going on for further education can therefore be a great financial burden. We hope that other businesses and industry will follow AECL's lead and set up similar financial assistance for GED graduates."



David Duffy (center), a 1992 Nova Scotia GED graduate and winner of one of the $1000 AECL scholarships, receives congratulations from the Hon. Robert Harrison (right), Nova Scotia's Minister of Education and Culture, and Clair Ripley, representing Atomic Energy of Canada, Ltd.

Three GED graduates were awarded the first of the AECL scholarships this summer.

Yves Vaillancourt,of New Brunswick, is studying Electronic Engineering Technology at New Brunswick Community College, Moncton. David Duffy, from Nova Scotia, is taking courses to become a Computer Service Technician at Nova Scotia Community College, Burridge. Donnie Leard, of Prince Edward Island, is enrolled in the Welding Technology program at New Brunswick Community College, Moncton.

The GED testing program has provided more than 360,000 Canadian adults with the opportunity to earn a high school equivalency certificate. GED has been successful in most Canadian provinces for more than 25 years. Now, with Ontario's commitment to the program, which became official earlier this year, the GED is offered in all of Canada's 12 provinces and territories except Quebec.

A Grade 12 diploma is often the minimum requirement for many skills development training courses, postsecondary education and employment. The GED Tests measure the educational maturity that the participant may have acquired through life experience.

The Canadian GED Tests are unique tests, separate from the U.S. editions. They are based on the Canadian English- and French-lan-

continued on page 13

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GED Graduates Finish at "Top" of "Class"

Every year, the GED Testing Service helps states, provinces, and territories recognize the GED graduate(s) who have achieved the highest score on the GED Tests in their respective jurisdiction. Each "high scorer" is presented with a plaque honoring their achievement.

Standard scores on the GED Tests range from a low of 20 to 80 for each of the five tests in the battery. Thus, the highest total score one can earn is 400 total standard score points. The highest score earned overall in 1996 was 393.

The average score earned by high scorers in the U.S. and its territories was 360 for those taking the English-language tests and 355 on the Spanish-language tests. The average high-score performance on the Canadian English-language GED Tests was 356.

To be eligible for the high scorer award, the GED graduate must obtain a minimum score of 300 total standard score points on the GED Tests and meet other eligibility criteria. If you would like more information on the selection process for high scorers in your state, province, or territory, contact your GED Administrator or Clarice Ulu at the GED Testing Service, (202) 939-9490.

United States:

ALASKA: Mr. Miguel A. Magdaleno-Garduno, Anchorage. ARIZONA: Ms. Rhonda Elizabeth Maxwell, Gilbert. ARKANSAS: Mr. James R. Hunt, Fort Smith. CALIFORNIA: Ms. Carolyn M. Snowden, Valley Center. CONNECTICUT: Ms. Darene Dewan, Darien. DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: Ms. Felecia J. McCauley (English) and Mr. Jose Nunez (Spanish) Washington. GEORGIA: Ms. Lisa Kathleen Tamamm, Alpharetta. HAWAII: Mr. Will Oliver Lichty, Honolulu. IDAHO: Mr. Timothy L. Munro, Lewiston. INDIANA: Mr. Kevin M. Shea, Indianapolis. IOWA: Ms. Amber Elizabeth Leahy, Fairfield. KANSAS: Mr. Martin Murillo Gonzalez (Spanish), Scott City and Ms. Trudi Lou Albers (English), Colby. KENTUCKY: Ms. Gwendolyn Renae Hicks, Cynthiana. MARYLAND: Mr. Michael P. Chapman, Severn. MASSACHUSETTS: Ms. Karen A. Taylor, Marshfield. MICHIGAN: Ms. Jennifer Lyn Boursaw, Beaverton. MINNESOTA: Mr. Paul F. Lundgren, Golden Valley and Ms. Jessica Wade-Ferrell, Madison, tied score. MISSISSIPPI: Mr. John Taylor Lindsey, Jackson City. MISSOURI: Ms. Leela Grace, Columbia. MONTANA: Ms. Renée M. Sundquist, Bozeman. NEBRASKA: Mr. Jay E. Chapman, Omaha. NEVADA: Mr. Jerry D. Sanford, Henderson. NEW HAMPSHIRE: Ms. Natalya Kay Skousen, Colebrook. NORTH CAROLINA: Mr. Donald Rex Harwood, Alexander. NORTH DAKOTA: Ms. Lynn M. (Voeller) Walsh, Wolford. OHIO: Ms. Monica B. Jones, North Olmstead. OKLAHOMA: Mr. Rodney M. Berry, Tulsa. PENNSYLVANIA: Ms. Jessica L. Henry, Butler. RHODE ISLAND: Mr. Wayne R. Beady, Jr., West Warwick. UTAH: Ms. Andrea M. Lowry, American Fork. VERMONT: Mr. Peter G. Johnson, Wolcott. VIRGINIA: Mr. Alejandro Andrade Sanchez, Annandale. WASHINGTON: Ms. Jessica Long, Seattle. WEST VIRGINIA: Mr. Kenneth Shawn Hensley, Augusta. WYOMING: Ms. Michelle Maria Green, Cheyenne.

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The following jurisdictions have not yet reported their high scorer for 1996: ALABAMA, COLORADO, DELAWARE, FLORIDA, ILLINOIS, LOUISIANA, MAINE, NEW JERSEY, NEW MEXICO, NEW YORK, OREGON, SOUTH CAROLINA, TENNESSEE, TEXAS, WISCONSIN, MANITOBA, AMERICAN SAMOA, KWAJALEIN, MARSHALL ISLANDS, MICRONESIA, PANAMA, PUERTO RICO.

Scholarship, from page 10

guage high school curricula, and normed on Canada's high school populations.

"What a wonderful way to boost a student's morale and help a worthy applicant become and excellent student," remarked Dr. Elizabeth R. Epperly, president of the University of Prince Edward Island.

AECL's scholarships to GED graduates set a precedent for all of Canada.

According to G.T. Colter, Ph.D., Chair of the Department of Engineering at the University of New Brunswick, "In my experience, GED graduates definitely contribute to a very positive and enhanced learning environment for the younger students as well as for the class instructor...Such tangible assistance should be a positive encouragement to a group of potential university students who have been overlooked or not reached."

Julie Beaulieu, a Grade 11 student in Fredericton, New Brunswick, was a youth apprentice with Atomic Energy of Canada, Ltd. during the summer of 1996.

Teaching Tips, from page 8

same readers may often find themselves commenting under their breath about a "1" or "2" paper that is "inarticulate" or that contains "unrelated thoughts." Huxtable may have constructed categories with enormous gray areas but in many respects, she established a basis for the rubrics of today.

Changes were on the horizon, however, that yet again would alter the educational landscape. In response to large-scale assessment of student writing, some researchers began to criticize written examinations, not only on the basis of their varying measurement scales but also because these examinations were extremely time consuming. Challenges were also made that the writing tests were biased against those who could not write. Paterson, a respected psychologist of the 1920s, argued for "new" types of tests that would reduce the need for "laborious handwriting," thus freeing the student "from the dangers of writer's cramp." What were these new test types? Tests relying heavily on short answer, true-false, and multiple-choice responses!

Did the use of written examinations promote multiple-choice testing? In many respects, yes. Now, many in the testing community are advocating a return to the essay and other forms of direct assessment. The educational pendulum continues its slow movement, back and forth, back and forth.

What did you do on your summer vacation?

Arthur M. Halbrook, Ph.D. is the Writing Assessment Specialist at the GED Testing Service

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Super Bowl. His contract is also up for re-negotiation after the 1996 season. A raise, he says would go to support his ongoing efforts at improving his community.

To this end, Reggie White spent the better part of the spring acting in a feature-length film called *Reggie's Prayer*. The movie chronicles the career of a professional football player who retires from the playing field so that he can directly affect the lives of at-risk teens.

"When I saw this script, I said this is something that can go a lot further," White explains. "Not for the acting part, but for getting my message out." The film is scheduled to be released late in 1996.

So it is with the same selfless attitude that Reggie White approached his work with the GED Testing Service. The public service announcement featuring this football-movie star-minister and his wife, Sara, and children Jeremy, and Jecoila, is available this fall.

When the day comes that Reggie White decides to hang up his cleats, we know the "Minister of Defense" will remain a legend—both on and off the field.

Richard Kraus is the Outreach Projects Coordinator at the American Council on Education's Center for Adult Learning and Educational Credentials.

To order...

the Reggie White PSA, contact the GED Testing Service Fulfillment Service at (301) 604-9073. The VHS format videotape (item 251022) is $20.00 and the audiocassette (item 251023) is $5.00, plus shipping and handling charges.

News and Notes

GED Administrator Honored for Service to People with Disabilities

Frank Shea, the GED Administrator for Massachusetts, was named the 1996 Labor Representative of the Year by the Industry Labor Council/National Center for Disability Services. The national award is presented annually to a labor representative who has done the most to improve employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

In addition to his work with the GED program, Frank Shea supervises Vocational Teacher Approval and is a Revocation Officer for Teacher Certification. A trustee and bargaining team member of the Service Employees International Union Local 509, Frank is also active in Boy Scouts, Special Olympics, Easter Seals, and the Worcester (MA) Area Association of Retarded Citizens.

Massachusetts Commissioner of Education, Robert V. Antonucci noted, "This is quite an honor for Frank. We are very proud of his achievement."

Center Provides Guidance on Teaching Adults with Learning Disabilities

The National Adult Literacy and Learning Disabilities Center, a program of the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL), has a substantive list of publications for instructors and tutors who are working with adults who have, or are suspected of having, learning disabilities.

Among the titles available are: *Important Definitions of Learning Disabilities; Self-Esteem: Issues for the Adult Learner,* and *State Resource Sheet for Literacy and Learning Disabilities.* ✉ the Academy for Educational Development, 1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20009-1202. The documents are also available online through NIFL's website, ☛ http://novel.nifl.gov/ or through the Academy's web site, ☛ http://www.aed.org. Click on "AED gopher" and select "Preschool, Primary, Secondary, Higher, & Adult Education."

Laubach Literacy Now Accepting Grant Applications

Laubach Literacy, the world's oldest and largest nonprofit literacy organization is now seeking grant applications for its 1996 National Book Scholarship Fund (NBSF). Over the next two years, NBSF will distribute more than $500,000 in books and educational materials to qualified programs nationwide.

First priority is given to family literacy programs. Grants are also awarded to programs that work with the homeless, refugees, ESL programs, and adults with mental disabilities. The application deadline is December 15, 1996.

Laubach Literacy is dedicated to helping adults improve their lives and their communities by learning reading, writing, math, and problem-solving skills. Laubach sponsors programs throughout the U.S., Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

For more information or to apply for a grant, ✉ Mara Roberts,

Symbol Key

- ✉ Mailing Address
- ☎ Telephone Number
- ☛ Internet Address/URL

Project Administrator, the National Book Scholarship Fund, Laubach Literacy, Box 131, Syracuse, NY 13210. ☎ (315) 422-9121.

Wal-Mart Funds Education Grants to Employees

Wal-Mart, the United States' largest private employer, administers educational initiatives that subsidize education for its 640,000 U.S. associates and their children with scholarship programs and GED assistance. Wal-Mart pays for costs incurred by associates and their spouses who prepare for and take the GED Tests. The company pays for employees' books, classes, and testing fees.

In Tulsa, OK, Wal-Mart is trying out a new work-based education program that helps employees enhance their skills on company time. Local teachers provide in-store training on topics such as technical reading, math, and communication strategies. Associates with children graduating from high school can also apply for a $6,000 scholarship to help fund their child's college education. Seventy families secured Walton Family Foundation Scholarships in 1995.

For more information on participating in Wal-Mart's workforce development initiatives :• Workforce Development, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. Corporate Offices, 702 S.W. 8th Street, Bentonville, AR 72716. ☎ Priscilla Hanson, Director of Workforce Development, Wal-Mart, Inc., (501) 273-4294.

HEATH Resource Center Shares Information on Disabilities, Accommodations

The HEATH Resource Center serves as an information exchange about educational support services, policies, procedures, adaptations, and opportunities at U.S. college campuses, voc-tech colleges, and other postsecondary institutions. Operated by the American Council on Education, HEATH handles more than 2,000 inquiries each month from students, secondary and postsecondary level instructors, parents, counselors and others.

Publications on a wide range of disabilities issues are available at no charge and may be reproduced. To subscribe to *Information from HEATH*, obtain a publications list, or ask a question, ✉ HEATH Resource Center, One Dupont Circle, Suite 800, Washington, DC 20036, ☎ (800)544-3284 ☛ HEATH@ACE.NCHE.EDU.

Funding for Adult Ed and Literacy Programs Rises to New Level

The President and Congress at the close of September agreed to an unprecedented $95 million increase in adult education funding next year.

This means that the adult education state grants that each state receives in July 1997 will be about 40 percent larger than the grant received this year, and that over one million more adults with basic education needs across the U.S. will be able to participate in adult ed and literacy programs.

The measure, part of a larger spending bill that increases education funding by a total of about $3 billion, was supported by the White House and House and Senate members from both sides of the aisle, and would not have happened without bipartisan support.

Congratulations to the many professionals and volunteers who worked over the past year or so to educate policy makers about the importance and effectiveness of adult education and literacy. Your hard work has paid off!

Magazine Works as Support, Forum for Campus Adjunct Staff

The *Adjunct Advocate*, now in its fifth year of publication, is a magazine for part-time and adjunct faculty working in postsecondary institutions across the U.S. The magazine focuses on the issues faced by this growing sector of two- and four-year college and university instructors, featuring articles on such topics as grade inflation, cheating, teachers' unions, and juggling part-time schedules.

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electronic, on-line, highly interactive and individualized accredited high school and continuing education program. It will deliver instruction through an Internet-based delivery system and satellite systems located at secondary schools.

The Pacific Star Schools Partnership is a multi-state consortium (serving Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Oregon, Washington, American Samoa, Guam, Republic of Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Republic of the Marshall Islands) that will use its $2.9 million to develop three interactive courses: GED instruction by satellite, a self-paced GED CD-ROM study program, and Career Two, a course geared to displaced adult workers who need retraining. Other system enhancements designed to augment high school completion, adult literacy, workforce readiness, and school to work transition are also part of the proposal. Learning sites will be at middle and secondary schools and the programs are designed for nationwide dissemination and/or replication.

LiteracyLink will create a pre-GED and workplace basic skills video service that responds to the need for pre-GED coursework, and a new video and on-line materials that will reflect the emphases of the revised 'GED 2000' test series. Both new series will be available for conventional broadcast by public television stations. The project will establish a technology-based resource center that will include training in technology issues and technical assistance as well as professional development video conferences. LiteracyLink will deliver content in easy-to-use electronic formats, with icon-driven menus augmented by audio instructions. Three major partners will join PBS in executing the project: the University of Pennsylvania's National Center on Adult Literacy, Kentucky Educational Television, and the Kentucky Department of Education. Many of LiteracyLink's activities will be implemented with assistance from the GED Testing Service and software providers. For delivery, the project will rely upon the local literacy programs of 25 established sites at schools, libraries, colleges, public television stations, businesses and community-based organizations across the U.S.

For more information about this year's Star Schools grant awardees, contact:

David Thomas, OERI, (202) 401-3026;

Monty McMahon, School CLASS Project, (402) 472-4341;

Steve Witter, Pacific Adult Literacy Project, (506) 456-7685;

Jinny Goldstein, PBS LiteracyLink, (703) 739-5140.

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Ceremonies Provide Rite of Passage for Nontraditional Graduates

The journey through life is not always easy and the messages of experience are often unclear. Few people know this better than the adults who have chosen to complete their high school education after their "time" has passed.

Contemporary life, with its scientific explanations for everything, often seems devoid of the rituals which defined for our ancestors their status on the path of life. But when we look more closely, the need for meaning that inspired ancient rituals survives in the form of significant events that mark a person's passage, even through a secular life: learning to drive, a first date, ...and high school graduation.

GED students who earned their diplomas through the New York City Public Schools' Auxiliary Services program pose during a June, 1996, ceremony at Hunter College. More than 2,300 guests gathered to honor the 629 graduates on their special day.

Joyce Michael, right, displays the "Outstanding Learner of the Year" award given to her by the McNairy County Adult and Community Education Center, Selmer, TN. On hand to congratulate Joyce and the 53 other GED graduates participating in the June graduation event was the area's state representative, Randy Rinks.

According to Jay D. Schvandevelt, a professor at Utah State University, "Ritual is important because it is a process by which the routine takes on symbolic meaning and personal histories become observable." And that is why graduation ceremonies are important events for GED graduates, whether or not they don the traditional academic robes which once served to keep students warm in dark, damp, medieval buildings.

The overwhelming response, in the form of letters, photos, and stories, to our March/April issue's graduation article is clear evidence of the desire among many nontraditional students for a formal ceremony to mark their passage into the realm of high school graduates.

In this issue, we offer our congratulations to each one of this year's GED graduates. Even if you didn't march down the aisle and listen to a speech or two, you've finally earned your diploma. Use it!

more pictures on page 9

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From the Director

Exciting Developments at GED Testing Service Offer Chances for Growth, Program Improvement

by Joan C. Auchter

This year of 1996 has been one of major transitions for the Center for Adult Learning and Educational Credentials (CALEC), the GED Testing Service (GEDTS), and for our parent organization, the American Council on Education.

All in one month, November, Bob Atwell departed from his long and productive role as ACE President, Hank Spille retired after 22 years of distinguished service to CALEC and ACE, and Jean Lowe resigned after ten years of untiring contributions to GEDTS. As you would suppose, the changes provide us with new challenges as well as new leadership.

Stanley O. Ikenberry is ACE's new President. As president of the three-campus University of Illinois from 1979 to 1995, he transformed the university's Chicago campus into the largest, most comprehensive research university campus in the area and instituted major science, technology, and computer science initiatives at the Urbana-Champaign campus. Dr. Ikenberry brings an unique understanding of the possibilities and challenges the coming years hold for education and we look forward to working with him.

With Hank's retirement, I am pleased to inform you that Susan Robinson will serve as CALEC's Interim Director. Many readers are familiar with Susan through her leadership in marketing and outreach for GEDTS. She brings to the task precisely the experience and personal qualities needed at this important time.

The GEDTS staff are eagerly addressing the many challenges of moving the GED program forward to the new millennium. As recommended in a recent management review of GEDTS, we are taking on a new direction and expanded vision.

Among the most exciting projects is the recalibration of the test production time frame to ensure that our new series of tests come out in a timely fashion. The GED 2000 Series Test Specifications Committee will meet in late January or early February to begin work on the new standards for the tests. From more than 200 nominations, we must select a representative committee of 30 nationally recognized experts. The panel will define subject matter standards to ensure that the tests remain educationally rigorous and reflect the most relevant parts of a typical high school curriculum for the year 2000 and beyond.

We convened a meeting of Canadian national content experts in Toronto, Ontario in early December to review Canadian content standards. We were pleased to find that Canada's four regional standards efforts while operating independently, had arrived at similar conclusions. Additionally, we found that the standards identified by these groups are not far from the United States' national and state subject matter efforts. All four content groups identified similar skill strands (e.g., critical thinking, information management and technology) that may define critical skills across content areas.

In November and December, we convened blue-ribbon councils to review our policies in two areas: testing accommodations for people with disabilities and test security. The reflections, evaluations, and recommendations we gleaned from members of these two important panels will inform the policies in the new ***GED Examiner's Manual***, due out in early 1997. While several of the recommendations can be implemented immediately, others we'll bring first to the annual conference of GED Administrators, scheduled for July in San Antonio, Texas.

We at the GED Testing Service are energized by our plans for the future and we look forward to working with you on these and the many other initiatives we'll be undertaking in the coming months. If you have suggestions for us, or if you would simply like more information, please contact Clarice Ulu here at the GED Testing Service, (202) 939-9490. We want to involve you in our new direction!

Joan Auchter is the Interim Director at the GED Testing Service. She also serves as the Director for the Test Development unit.

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Miss America 1997 Backs GED With New PSA

Tara Holland proclaims "power of one" message in public service announcement.

by Richard Kraus

Tara Holland's first steps down the runway as Miss America 1997 continues a mission she began at age 17 to improve, one by one, the lives of each person she meets. As Miss America, Tara Holland will be traveling the country projecting "the power of the crown" onto the issue of literacy. The GED Testing Service is pleased to announce that Tara Holland has also added her voice to raising awareness about the GED Tests by recording a public service announcement (PSA).

Miss America 1997, Tara Holland, is a former literacy volunteer who has recorded a GED public service announcement.

In the coming year, while fulfilling her duties as Miss America, Tara will be logging 20,000 miles a month and at every stop will be speaking out for literacy awareness and volunteerism. Tara's first job was as an adult literacy tutor. As a student at Florida State University, Tara recruited, trained, and placed more than 150 volunteers in 30 classrooms. At age 20, Tara produced and distributed to all 50 states a manual and audiotape entitled, "A New Job for the New You," a step-by-step job seeker's handbook. Now, with another opportunity to advance the cause of literacy, she will be touring the nation speaking not only to those Americans in need of improved reading skills, but to all Americans about the need to reach out and volunteer in some way to make literacy a priority.

Tara Holland launched her Miss America platform of "Literacy in America: The Power of One" during an October event hosted by the National Institute for Literacy and the Miss America Organization in Washington, DC. Tara strongly believes that individuals can influence the lives of others through volunteer activities. She says "Each one of us can find at least one program that we can participate in" to help improve the literacy skills of others, and she views higher literacy skills as a first step toward strengthening families and the future success of children. Tara makes this connection clear in her PSA for the GED by urging Americans to work toward higher goals, including earning a GED diploma.

The PSA featuring Miss America, Tara Holland, will be distributed nationwide this coming spring and will be available for order through the GED Fulfillment House by February, 1997. Readers may contact the fulfillment house at (301) 604-9073.

Richard Kraus is the Outreach Projects Coordinator for the Center for Adult Learning and Educational Credentials, American Council on Education.

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Demystifying the Test: the Art and Science of Passage Selection

by Katherine S. Woodward

Imagine the situation. You are a test specialist trying to select a passage for use as stimulus for questions on the GED Interpreting Literature and the Arts Test. The item writer you have hired has sent you three possibilities. You've rejected those. You ask the item writer to search again. This time, the item writer sends you five passages, absolutely convinced one of them will work. Still, you aren't satisfied. Finally, the ninth passage meets all the criteria, and the next step of the test construction process, the writing of questions, can begin.

Two questions emerge from this scenario. First, what are the criteria that make a passage appropriate as stimulus for the GED Interpreting Literature and the Arts Test? And second, what makes it so difficult for a passage to meet the criteria?

Six basic criteria set the overall parameters for passage selection. The passage should be of **correct length**, according to test specifications (between 200 and approximately 400 words, for prose; between 8 and approximately 25 lines, for poetry). Once excerpted, the passages must evidence **coherence**, that is, have a clear beginning, middle, and end. This second criterion is much harder to meet than one would expect, as passages often are excerpted from the middle of full-length works, such as novels or plays.

Passages also need to be written at a **level of difficulty** appropriate for the typical high school senior. Some passages clearly contain ideas too complex or abstract for the high school level; these are easy to reject. However, some passages that otherwise seem nearly perfect, contain too many individual words beyond high school level vocabulary. Particularly if the meaning of these words cannot be gleaned from context, these wonderful passages may also be turned down.

Sharing the six criteria with students may help to demystify the test and relieve student anxiety about the kind of literature they will encounter on the test.

Whether classical literature, popular literature, or commentary on the arts, the passage must be a **model of good writing**. It must have significant literary merit.

Related to the passage's literary quality, however, is a more subtle criterion: the passage must contain **sufficient richness for questions**. Generally, each passage has to yield ten questions appropriate for field testing. Moreover, the passages must yield questions evenly spread across the four cognitive areas: literal comprehension, inferential comprehension, analysis (including analysis of style and structure) and application (extension of ideas expressed in passage to new contexts). Many powerful passages cannot elicit the in-depth interpretation required for demonstration of high school proficiency.

Sometimes, the most difficult hurdle for a passage to surmount is the last criterion, **appropriateness of topic**. A passage appearing on the Interpreting Literature and the Arts Test should contain nothing that unfairly disadvantages or advantages certain groups of examinees. It likewise should contain nothing that unnecessarily distracts examinees from concentrating fully on test questions and doing their best.

Avoiding bias is one of the primary considerations when reviewing passages for appropriateness. Some kinds of bias, such as blatant offensiveness (e.g., direct stereotyping) can be screened out easily. Sometimes, however, the bias that derails passages can be more implicit.

For example, some passages are offensive because they show a lack of sensitivity to the way a group has been represented over time. In testing lingo, this bias is sometimes termed "secondary offensiveness."

A passage that focuses principally on a woman's beauty may be rejected, not because the passage contains derogatory comments about women ("primary offensiveness"), but because women have so often been defined by their appearance and thereby demeaned. When screening for bias, one cannot consider a passage in isolation. It is important to note that many passages inappropriate for use on the Interpreting Literature and the Arts Test because of bias work well in the classroom where students have the opportunity to discuss the relevant bias issues.

continued on page 6

Item* and Test Development Flow Chart

Item Development
Test Specialist (GEDTS staff)
Advertises for item writers in appropriate publications
Item Writers (external)
Prepare raw items (stimulus/passage and questions)
Test Specialist (GEDTS staff)
Revises or rejects items
Content Reviewers (external)
Director, Test Development (GEDTS staff)
Four independent reviewers judge content accuracy, clarity, suitability, level, and fairness of items
Test Specialist (GEDTS staff)
Revises or rejects items per reviewers' comments
Measurement and Fairness Reviewers (external)
Director, Psychometric Services (GEDTS staff)
Three independent reviewers judge items to ensure sound test construction, detect item flaws, and ensure fairness
Test Specialist (GEDTS staff)
Revises or rejects items per reviewers' comments
Professional Editor/ Proofer (external)
Edits and proofreads items for language and "surface" errors
Test Specialist (GEDTS staff)
Revises items per editor/ proofer's comments
GED Examinees
Respond to field test items during actual test administration
Final Form Development
Test Specialist (GEDTS staff)
Selects items and assembles GED test based on test specifications, examinee performance, and judgmental and statistical fairness reviews
Director, Test Development and Director, Psychometric Services (GEDTS staff)
Fairness Reviewers
Final Form Reviewers
Measurement Reviewers
(all external)
Nine independent reviewers judge content and fairness of individual items and test as a whole.
Test Specialist (GEDTS staff)
Revises test composition per reviewers' comments
Standardization of New Test Forms
High School Seniors
GED Tests are administered, during spring, to graduating seniors from a stratified random sample of high schools
Director, Psychometric Services (GEDTS staff)
Test forms equated
Final Operational GED Test Forms

* "Item" refers to a passage, graph or other stimulus and its related test questions.

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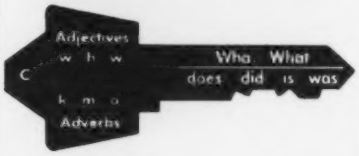

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Passages from page 4

Some passages are inappropriate for the GED Interpreting Literature and the Arts Test because they evoke too much emotion. For example, if a passage treats the death of a loved one in a car accident, some examinees may become so preoccupied by their own painful memories that they cannot concentrate as well on answering test questions. Such a passage could be discussed in the classroom, where consequences are not so significant. For the GED population in particular, passages about high school experiences may be similarly inappropriate. Other passages, less disturbing but still interesting and compelling, can assess the same literary skills. While admittedly, some person, somewhere, will be offended or disturbed by any passage, the objective in large-scale testing is to avoid offending or disturbing a significant subgroup of the test-taking population, and thereby impair their ability to perform well.

In screening passages for bias and sensitivity considerations, one must remember that the Interpreting Literature and the Arts Test is a high-stakes test. Answering even one or two additional questions correctly may make the difference between an examinee's receiving or not receiving a high school diploma.

The Item and Test Development Flow Chart on page 5 underscores the need for each passage to meet all six of the passage selection criteria, from correctness of length to appropriateness of topic. Each passage is repeatedly reviewed by internal staff at the GED Testing Service and by many external experts across the United States and Canada to assure its suitability. At any point in the development process, a passage can be rejected if it does not meet the selection criteria.

What are the implications of the passage selection criteria for GED teachers? Sharing the six criteria with students may help to demystify the test and relieve student anxiety about the kind of literature they will encounter on the test. Awareness of the criteria can also inspire several useful student assignments. For example, a teacher could ask students to select a passage which they believe is appropriate for the test, based on the six selection criteria, and then defend their choice,orally and/or in writing.

Literary passages selected for use on the GED Tests must meet standards in six areas:

- *Length*
- *Coherence*
- *Level of difficulty*
- *Model of good writing*
- *Richness for questions*
- *Appropriateness of topic*

For an easier assignment, students could be asked to choose among passages preselected by the teacher. Using the six criteria to select a passage encourages students to gain a sense of ownership of a piece of literature while they simultaneously analyze the literature from multiple perspectives. The teacher might extend the assignment by asking students to write sample questions based on their passage, and then perhaps to give their passage and questions to other students.

When most people think of a GED Interpreting Literature and the Arts Test, they think of the 45 questions. Good questions emerge from good passages.

Katherine S. Woodward, Ph.D. is the Test Specialist for Interpreting Literature and the Arts at the GED Testing Service. She also oversees the development of Special Editions.

Experience, Research Shed Light on Reading Problems

by Meg Schofield

Not long ago, my husband, a motorcycle racing enthusiast, took me to a well-known racetrack out in the desert, where I had an experience that helped me get closer to the adult students in my literacy program. I was more or less on my own because my husband was working down in the pits. I knew only the most obvious things about motorcycle racing — the riders would go as fast as they could (ideally, in the same direction), someone would end up first, and someone would finish last.

All around me, the fans in the stands frequently turned to each other, as if on cue, screaming in unison, "Did you see THAT!!?" I would spin my head around, squinting, scanning the blur, thinking, "See what? WHAT?" Within twenty minutes, the thrill of the deafening engine revs reverberating through my body had worn off, and I had settled down into a glazed-over state of disoriented confusion. Races started, stopped, stalled, started over, ended, or seemed to end, all for reasons which I, apparently, could not discern. I failed to "Ooooh" and "Ahhhh" on cue with my fellow fans. My confusion made me anxious, and I eventually grew bored and listless. While everyone around me seemed to be deriving enormous pleasure from the event, I was thinking of all the things I would rather be doing. I retreated to the car and read my book. I made a mental note to return to the track the following month. NOT!

I understand better now the experiences of the many adult learners I know, for whom reading has been a lifelong struggle. My experience at the racetrack was similar in one very germane respect to their problems with printed text. Like my students facing a page brimming with indecipherable words, I could see the 'whole' all right, but my picture was a frustrating mess—decidedly *not* greater than the sum of its proverbial parts. In fact, it was precisely the parts which I failed to grasp, because I did not know how to look. What seemed to me a maddening chaos of noise and exhaust, was, in fact, governed by a definite system. The system provides the initiated with a host of helpful cues (colored flags, the riders' numbers and plates, exhaust noises, etc.) which, once understood, bring focus, meaning, and thus satisfaction to the racetrack experience.

Some adult students ... may score into the junior high school range on tests of word recognition, but don't be fooled!

Likewise, an emerging consensus of research findings points to the need to get down to the 'parts' level, waaay down, to make the system which governs written language accessible to disabled readers. Without access to the system upon

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Learning Disabilities from page 7

written language is built, many poor readers are not likely to derive satisfaction on their own from pages of print. I know just how it feels to 'scan the blur.'

During the past several years, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) has invested more than $80 million in large-scale research and longitudinal studies of children to ascertain the causes of learning disabilities. NICHD researchers have documented that the primary problem underlying the difficulties may individuals have with reading and spelling lies with the most basic of language blocks: phonemes. According the 1995 publication, Research in Learning Disabilities at the NICHD, "Disabled readers do not readily acquire the alphabetic code when learning to read, due to deficiencies in phonological processing." (p.12) It also states: "Deficits in phonological awareness reflect the core deficit in dyslexia." (p. 10).

Most of us internalize the alphabetic code with seemingly little effort. A beginning reader might, for example, recognize the word 'circle' on sight. When shown for the first time the word 'circus,' he probably begins to build a generalization that the letters, 'c-i-r,' correspond to the sound he hears at the beginning of both words. This concept would be reinforced if he is taught that 'c' followed 'e,' 'i,' or 'y' makes a /s/ sound. Much later, he may encounter words like 'circa' and 'circumference' and handily pronounce them, even before he is aware of their meaning. This process of making and registering sound/letter generalizations goes on thousands of times over throughout the period in which a "normal" reader develops mastery over written language.

But what about people for whom this process is not easily acquired, for whom years of primary education—often (yes, often!) including phonics programs—have failed to alleviate their struggle with reading and spelling? Many adult literacy students have been exposed to some phonics instruction but (and this is a big 'but'), those with a language-based learning disability were not able to absorb, internalize, or apply that instruction. They learned instead to rely almost exclusively on two well-rehearsed strategies: memorizing whole words and guessing.

The interventions that would have helped [adult students] in elementary school can still help them now, whether their reading problems stem from poor instruction or a neurological deficit.

Without screening measures designed to test phonological knowledge and the ability to apply that knowledge to reading and spelling, adult literacy (non-ESL) programs may be missing the mark entirely in identifying the underlying instructional needs in up to 70% of their students. Some adults have managed to memorize a staggering number of words. They may score into the junior high school range on tests of word recognition, but don't be fooled! Many of them read far below their potential and continue to find reading and writing a great struggle. They may recognize the word 'photograph,' but be unable to spell it, or to read correctly 'photographic' or 'photogenic.'

Should research on learning disabilities in children inform our work with adult students? You bet! The interventions that would have helped them in elementary school can still help them now, whether their reading problems stem from poor instruction or a neurological deficit. At our adult literacy center we have learned from direct experience that we must provide approximately 70% of our students with activities that teach them directly and systematically how to look at words, how to determine the sequence of sounds in words, how to predict the sound behavior of groups of letters in the chunks we call syllables. Our teaching needs to engage our students' visual, auditory, and tactile brain centers. So many of my students are practically euphoric when they discover that there is a system governing the English language and that the system can, at last, belong to them too! The overwhelming majority of these students have

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Phonics Lessons Boost Retention Rates

At the Chula Vista Public Library's Literacy Team Center, every English-speaking adult learner is screened for phonological awareness, decoding and spelling skills, as well as for a history of reading problems in school.

If deficits are identified in these areas, the student is likely to be placed in a highly structured, systematic, multisensory phonology program. The program uses the Wilson Reading System and Lindamood Auditory Discrimination in Depth products to logically structure and control the vocabulary introduced. Students are tutored by volunteers who have undergone an intensive 18-hour training, followed by staff monitoring and support.

The Wilson and Lindamood-based instruction is offered alongside context-based life skill lessons. Students may take advantage of both approaches depending on personal need, skill level, and available time. Following the introduction of the phonology program, the Literacy Team's overall one-year retention rate soared from 30% to 63%. The one-year retention rate for students using the phonology program is 77%.

GED graduates at the Region XVI Education Service Center in Amarillo, TX relax following an August, 1996, cap and gown ceremony. With more than 1,700 looking on from the audience, 190 graduates crossed the stage to take possession of their diplomas.

Cleveland, TN, graduate Steven Calfee proposed to his sweetheart of seven years, Christy May, after claiming his GED diploma.

Friends and family gather to congratulate Laverne "Cookie" Clarke, of Hampton, VA, on earning her External Diploma. Before she could read, Cookie mobilized her neighbors to petition the city for an adult education center. It has now served her community for 15 years.

Reminder! Minimum Scores Rise in New Year

On January 1, the passing standard for the GED Tests becomes a minimum standard score of 40 on each test AND an average standard score of 45, a level now met by 66% of graduating U.S. high school seniors. Many states, provinces, and territories already meet or exceed this standard.

In jurisdictions where lower minimum scores have been in effect, only GED examinees who passed the GED Tests under the 1996 score requirements *and* completed testing by December 31, 1996, are eligible for a GED diploma. Candidates who haven't completed testing by the end of 1996, or whose partial scores don't meet the 1997 standard, must meet the new standard across all five tests to earn a GED diploma.

Some U.S. states may face legislative delays and have applied for extensions. If you have a question about how the new minimum score standards affect you, please call the GED Administrator for your state, province, or territory, or contact Allida Joyce at the GED Testing Service, (202) 939-9490.

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AmeriCorps Application Deadline Approaches

Do you know a GED student or graduate who's in the market for their next challenge? The National Civilian Community Corps, part of the AmeriCorps national service program created by Congress and President Clinton in 1993, is seeking men and women ages 18 to 24 to serve communities throughout the United States beginning next September. The deadline for applications is April 15, 1997.

AmeriCorps*NCCC is open to U.S. citizens, nationals, and lawful permanent resident aliens of the United States who are committed to spending up to a year of their lives "getting things done" for a stronger, safer, smarter, and healthier America. Young men and women of all educational, economic, and social backgrounds have participated in and benefited from this full-time residential program operated by the Corporation for National Service.

The program takes its inspiration from the Depression-era Civilian Conservation Corps, which put thousands of young Americans to work restoring the natural environment. While retaining the focus on the environment, AmeriCorps*NCCC also recognizes that as the challenges our nation faces become more diverse, so must the solutions.

Participants ("Corpsmembers") take on such enterprises as constructing, mapping and improving urban and rural parks, restoring streams and rivers, renovating senior citizen housing, and developing and implementing child immunization campaigns. Corpsmembers are trained in disaster relief and some teams even learn to fight forest fires. Over the ten months of service, members will work in permanent teams of 10-15 on many types of projects, each lasting anywhere from a few days to several months.

AmeriCorps members from diverse backgrounds work in teams to address community problems.

Corpsmembers receive lodging, meals, uniforms, skills training, limited health benefits, and a modest living allowance during the time they serve in the Corps. Those with dependent children can receive matching funds to assist with child care costs, however, children are not permitted on campus. Upon program completion, Corpsmembers are entitled to a $4,725 award toward further education and training or repayment of existing student loans.

The program begins in September with rigorous training in leadership, team building, citizenship, and physical conditioning at one of four locations: Charleston, SC; Denver, CO; San Diego, CA; and Perry Point, MD. Participants

continued on next page

Tips for a good application

An application's purpose, whether it's to a training program or a college, is to represent you to people you've never met. Think carefully and ask yourself: "What do I want this application to say about me?"

- *Select references carefully; this is one time when friends and relatives don't count! Ask a teacher, former supervisor or coach, your minister, or your probation officer to serve as a reference for you. References should come from people who know you but don't "owe" you.*
- *Read over the application carefully; get help with the parts you don't understand.*
- *Gather all information requested on the application.*
- *Set aside time to work on a "draft" application, completing all the sections on a separate piece of paper.*
- *Respond thoughtfully and honestly to all the questions and plan the written portions carefully. Lying on an application is the one sure way to be disqualified.*
- *Remember that most people don't complete a long application all in one sitting. It's okay to set it aside and come back to it; just don't miss the deadline!*
- *Gather your draft and any other information and have it all handy when you sit down to complete the application.*
- *Type or hand print the application neatly in ink.*
- *Keep a photocopy for your records.*
- *Make sure that you put the correct amount of postage on the envelope.*

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AmeriCorps from page 10

live in dormitory style residences and eat meals in an on-campus cafeteria. Prospective Corpsmembers apply to the AmeriCorps*NCCC program and, if accepted, will be assigned to one of the campus locations. They have most evenings and weekends free, but extracurricular activities keep them busy beyond a normal work day. Some teams can be sent on special short-term projects where camping and "roughing it" may be required.

Travel to the campus, and back home at the end of service, is provided by the program and Corpsmembers may bring their car or bike to campus, if they have one. There is a two-week vacation around the winter holidays and federal holidays are observed. Selection for the program is based on a seven page application, two personal references, and a telephone interview. All selected applicants undergo a drug screen and background check.

The Corporation for National Service has other AmeriCorps programs and programs that get senior citizens and school-aged children involved in their communities.

For more information or to request an AmeriCorps application, check with your local GED Testing Center, call (800) 942-2677, or point to http://www.cns.gov.

Symbol Key

- ✉ Mailing Address
- ☎ Telephone Number
- ☛ Internet Address/URL

Ooops!

The September/October issue of GED Items reported that 91% of Canada's provinces meet the new minimum score standard.... The figure should be 100%. Our apologies for the error!

News and Notes

"Open the Doors..." Brochure Now in Bilingual Version

For those who have always wanted to say, "Ouvir les Portes sur Votre Avenir!" but didn't know how, a new French/English version of the popular four-color folded brochure, "Open the Door to Your Future" is now available from the GED Fulfillment House.

About 3,500 examinees take the French-language GED Tests each year and, until now, no French-language materials were available to reach them. The French-language tests are based on Canadian high-school curriculum and normed on French-speaking Canadian high school students. The bilingual brochure was produced in cooperation with Editions d'Acadie, publishers of the only French-language GED preparation manual.

To order, ☎ GED Fulfillment House, (301) 604-9073 and request item #250612.

LDA Conference Slated for February

The Learning Disabilities Association of America hosts its annual conference at the Palmer House in Chicago, IL, February 16–22, 1997. For more information and registration materials ✉ LDA, 4146 Library Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15234 ☎ (412) 341-1515

Laubach Literacy Action Meets in June 1998

The U.S. Program Division of Laubach Literacy has scheduled its Biennial Conference for June 11–14 1998 in Columbus, OH. For advance information, ✉ Janet Hiemstra, Director of Conferences, Laubach Literacy Action, 1320 Jamesville Ave., Box 131, Syracuse NY 13210 ☎ (315) 422-9376, ext. 283.

NIFL Spreads Info on Welfare, Adult Ed Reform

The National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) wants to inform adult educators about the changes in the federal-state financial relationship resulting from the new U.S. welfare law which took effect in October, 1996. The changes have important implications for the adult and education and literacy field.

NIFL provides a series of policy updates and fact sheets for adult education and literacy practitioners and program directors on a variety of issues related to legislation and regulations. To be added to the Policy Update list, ☎ (202) 632-1500 and select option 6.

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Learning Disabilities from page 8

declared, "This is what I always needed. Why hasn't anybody taught me this way before?"

Most of us offer programs to meet the external needs, the life skills and 'competencies' which we know adults require. Of course they need to be able to complete job applications, write checks, read directions at the gas pump and on the Tylenol bottle. But what most of them really want just one thing: to be able to read and write just about anything. They want to be able to bring the 'blur' into focus, so that they too can derive pleasure and information from the printed page.

Meg Schofield directs the Chula Vista Public Library's Literacy Team Center in San Diego County, California. Earlier this year, the program was named the state's top community-based literacy provider by the State Collaborative Literacy Council.

For GED Examiners

Today's Special: Test Answers on Rye ...Hold the Mayo!

Rome, Italy

If you're an experienced GED Examiner and you think you know all the tricks... here's a new one for your files:

An Italian teacher who handed out salami sandwiches to students taking an exam has been disciplined—not for allowing them to eat during the test, but for hiding the answers between the slices of bread!

Ettore Szokoll, 30, was suspended as an examination supervisor at the Fratelli Calvi high school in Bergamo, a town in northern Italy, the Italian news agency ANSA reported.

It said that Szokoll, a law teacher, slipped out of the room where students were taking an electronics test on June 27, got a friend to work out the answers, photocopied them, and struck a deal with a nearby barkeeper to slip them into 15 salami sandwiches.

Another exam supervisor grew suspicious and found an answer sheet inside one of the snacks.

The ANSA report said that Szokoll could face charges of abuse of office and a damages suit from the school.

The bulk of the preceding story is reprinted from the July 20, 1996, edition of the ***Bermuda Royal Gazette*** *and comes courtesy of Janet Snow, the GED Administrator for Connecticut.*

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